## contents







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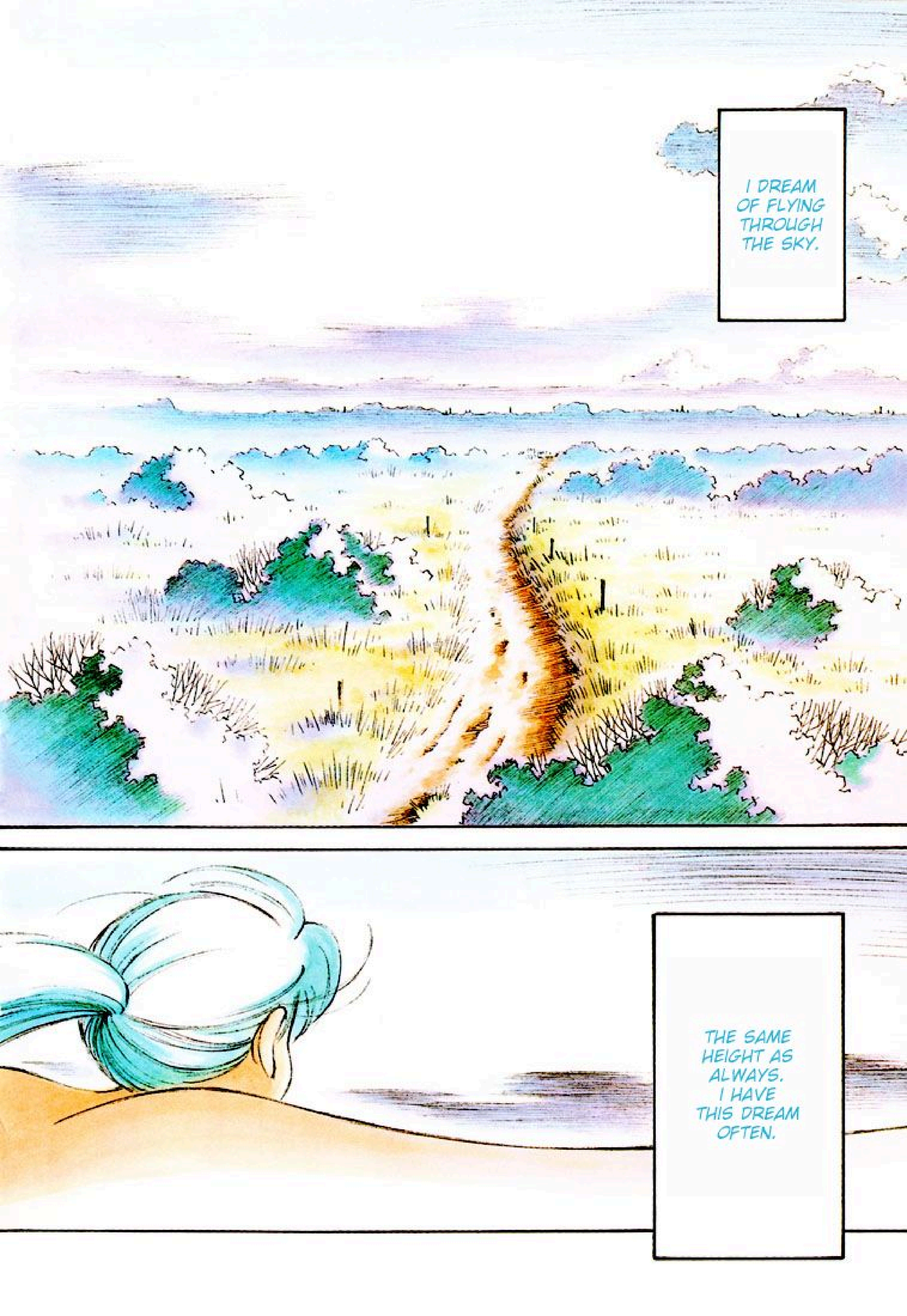
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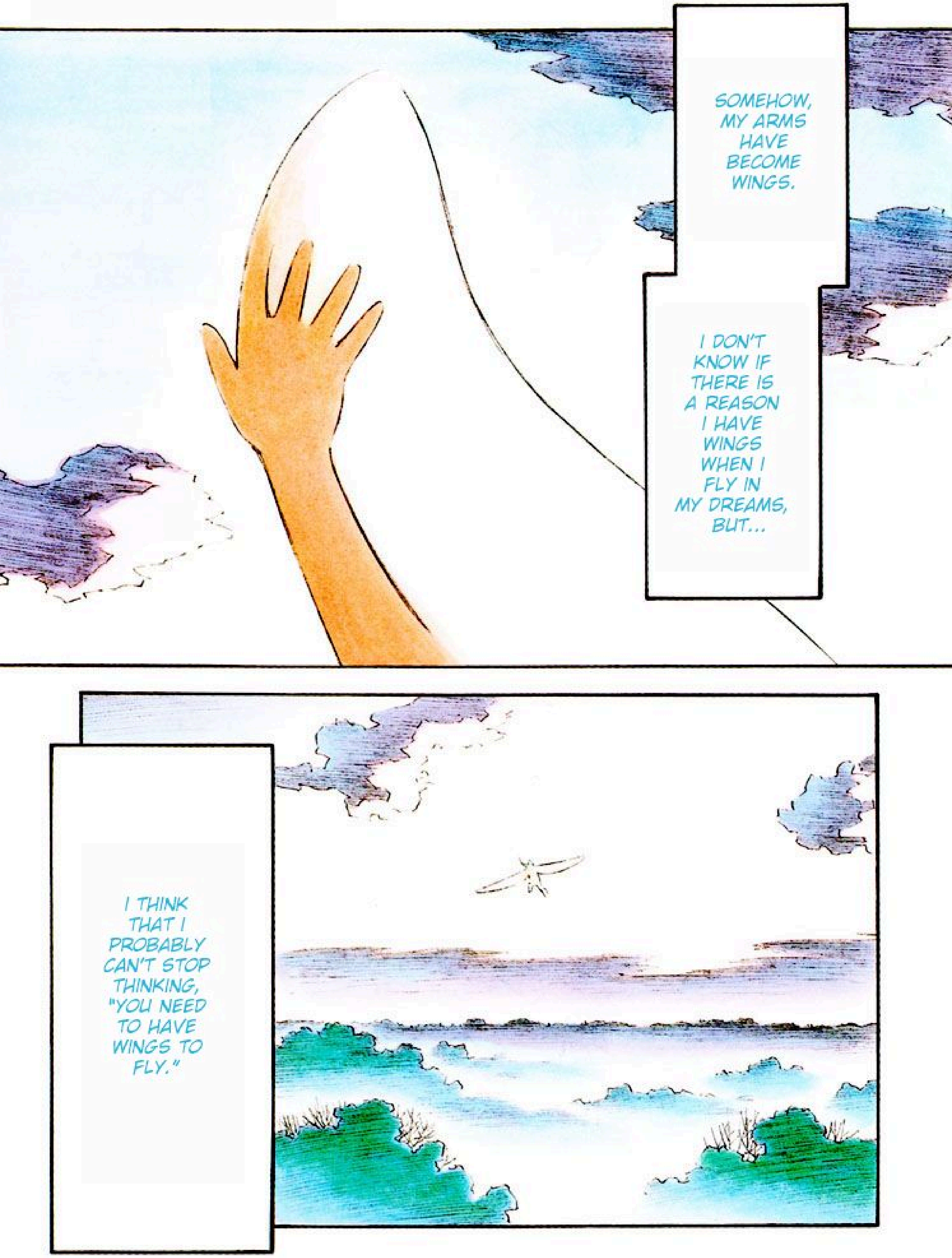
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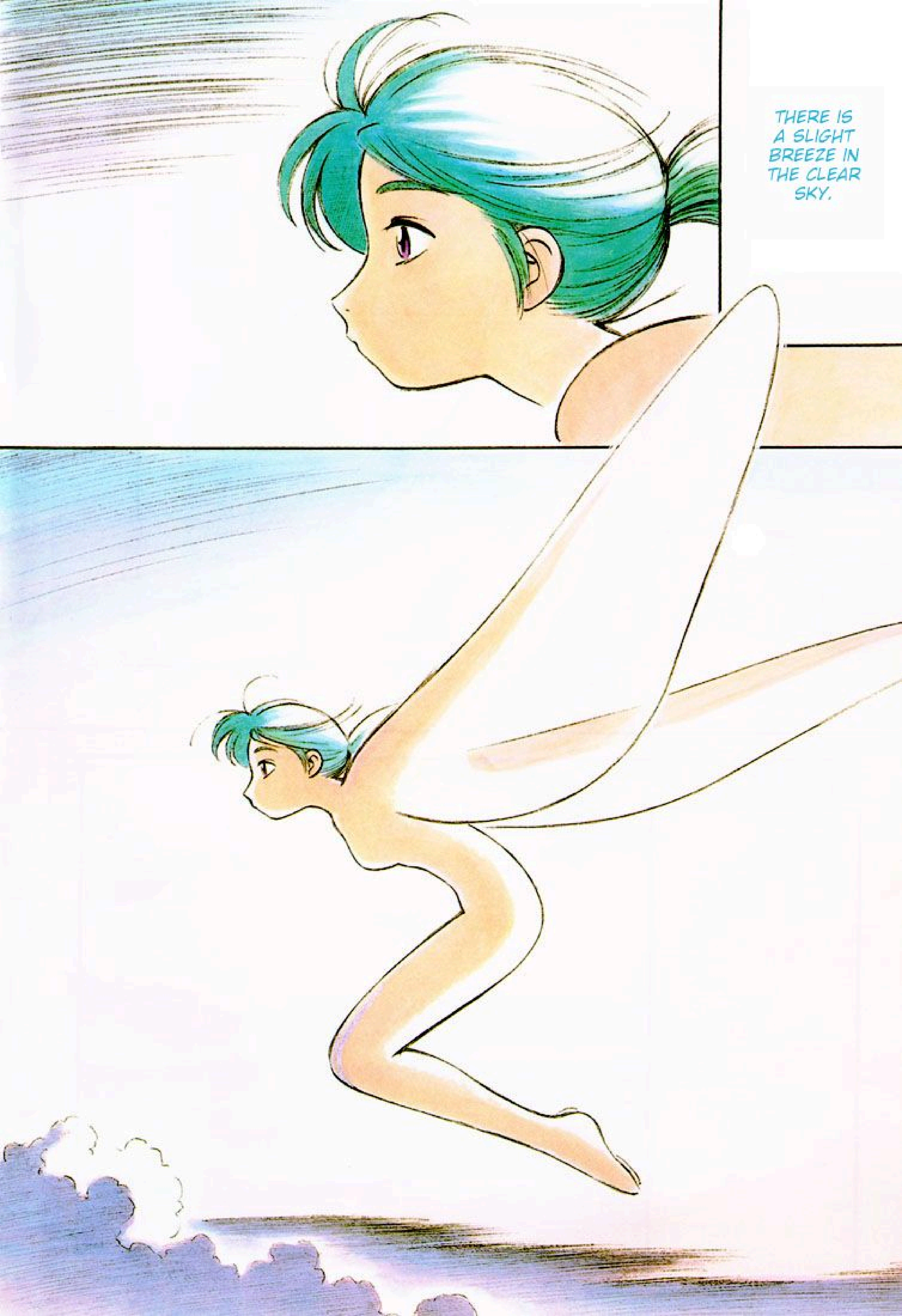
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# Story 55 White Sky



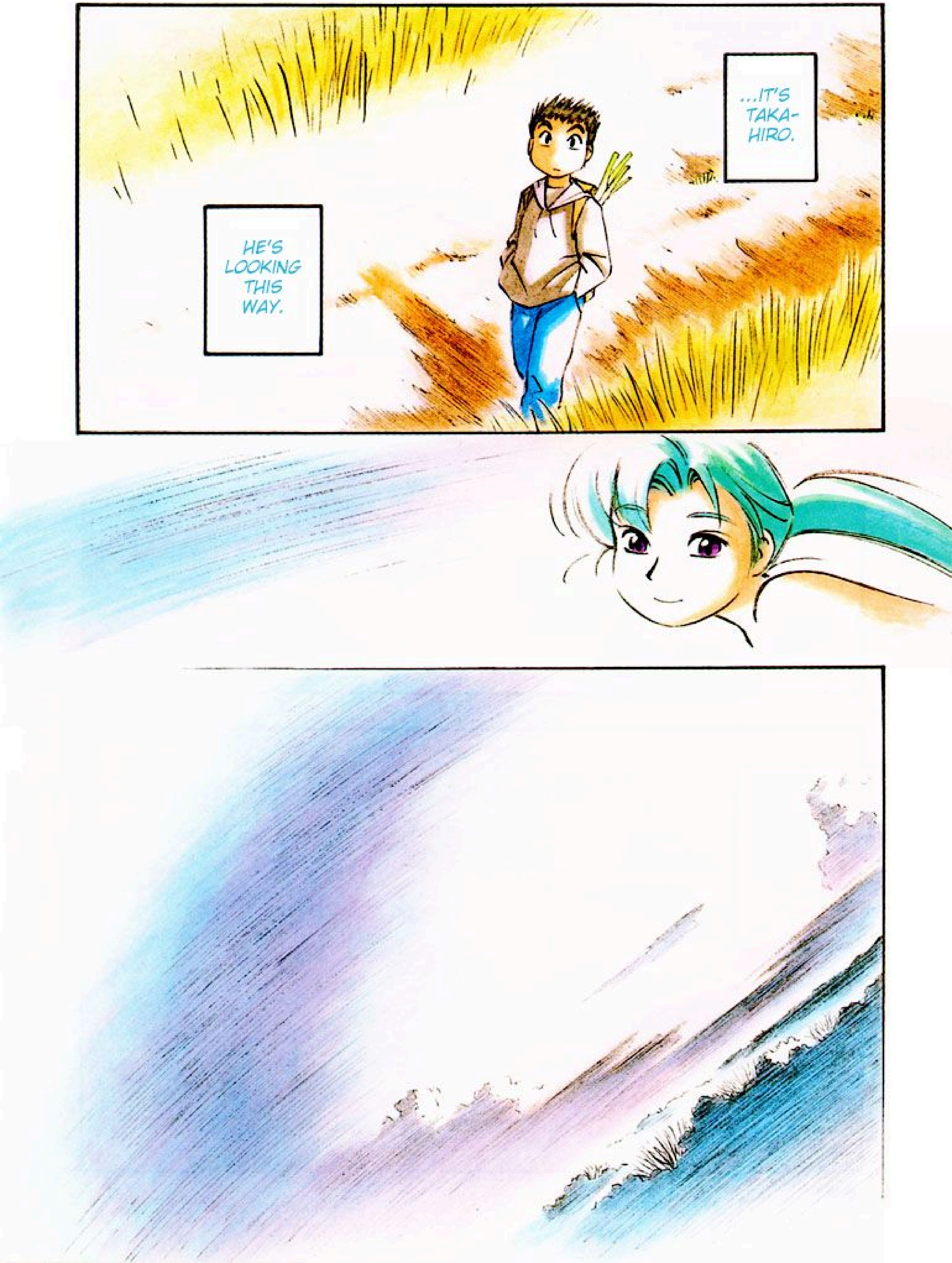

I DREAM OF FLYING THROUGH THE SKY.
THE SAME HEIGHT AS ALWAYS. I HAVE THIS DREAM OFTEN.


SOMEHOW, MY ARMS HAVE BECOME WINGS.
I DON'T KNOW IF THERE IS A REASON I HAVE WINGS WHEN I FLY IN MY DREAMS, BUT...
I THINK THAT I PROBABLY CAN'T STOP THINKING, "YOU NEED TO HAVE WINGS TO FLY."

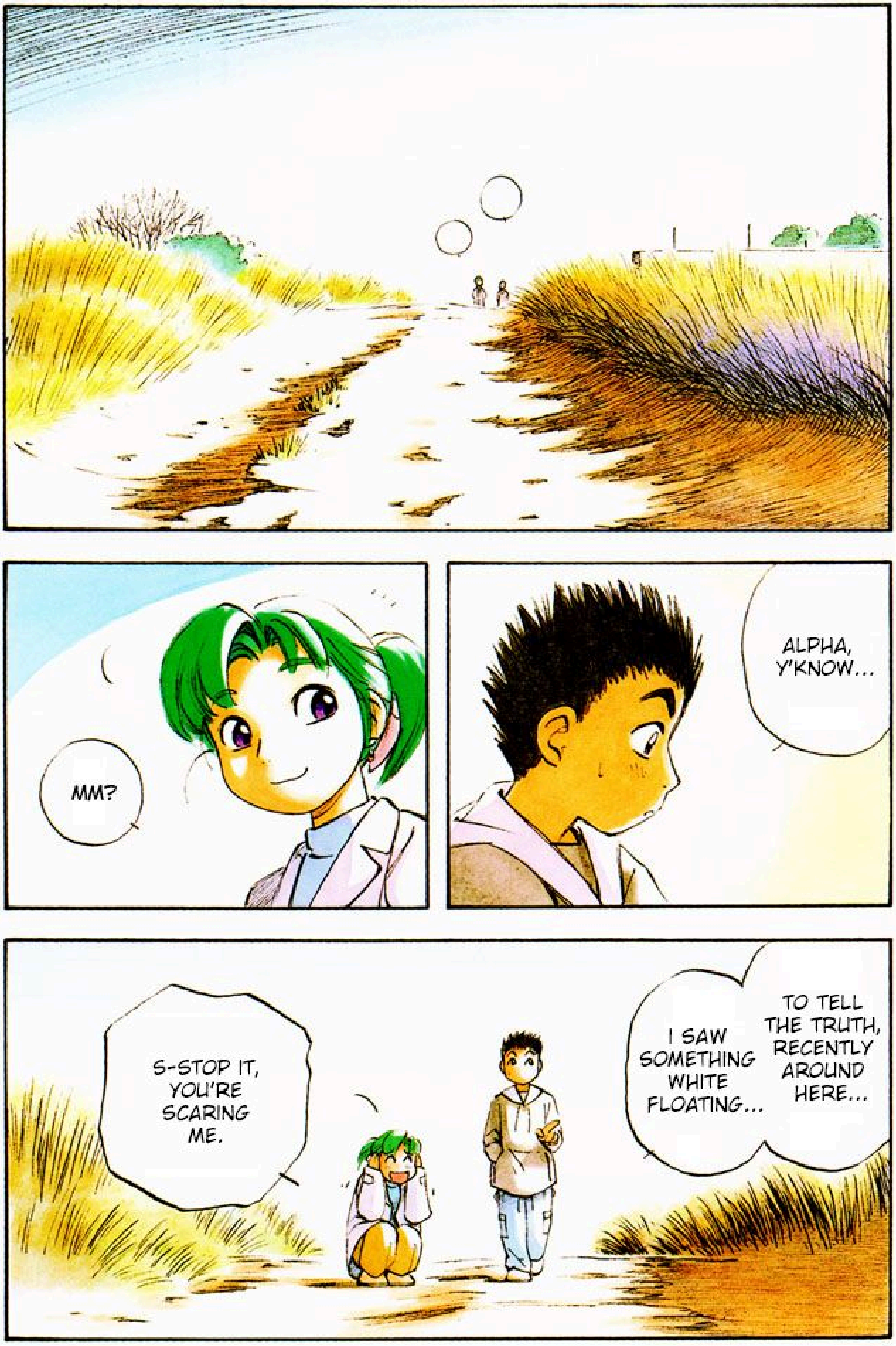

THERE IS A SLIGHT BREEZE IN THE CLEAR SKY.



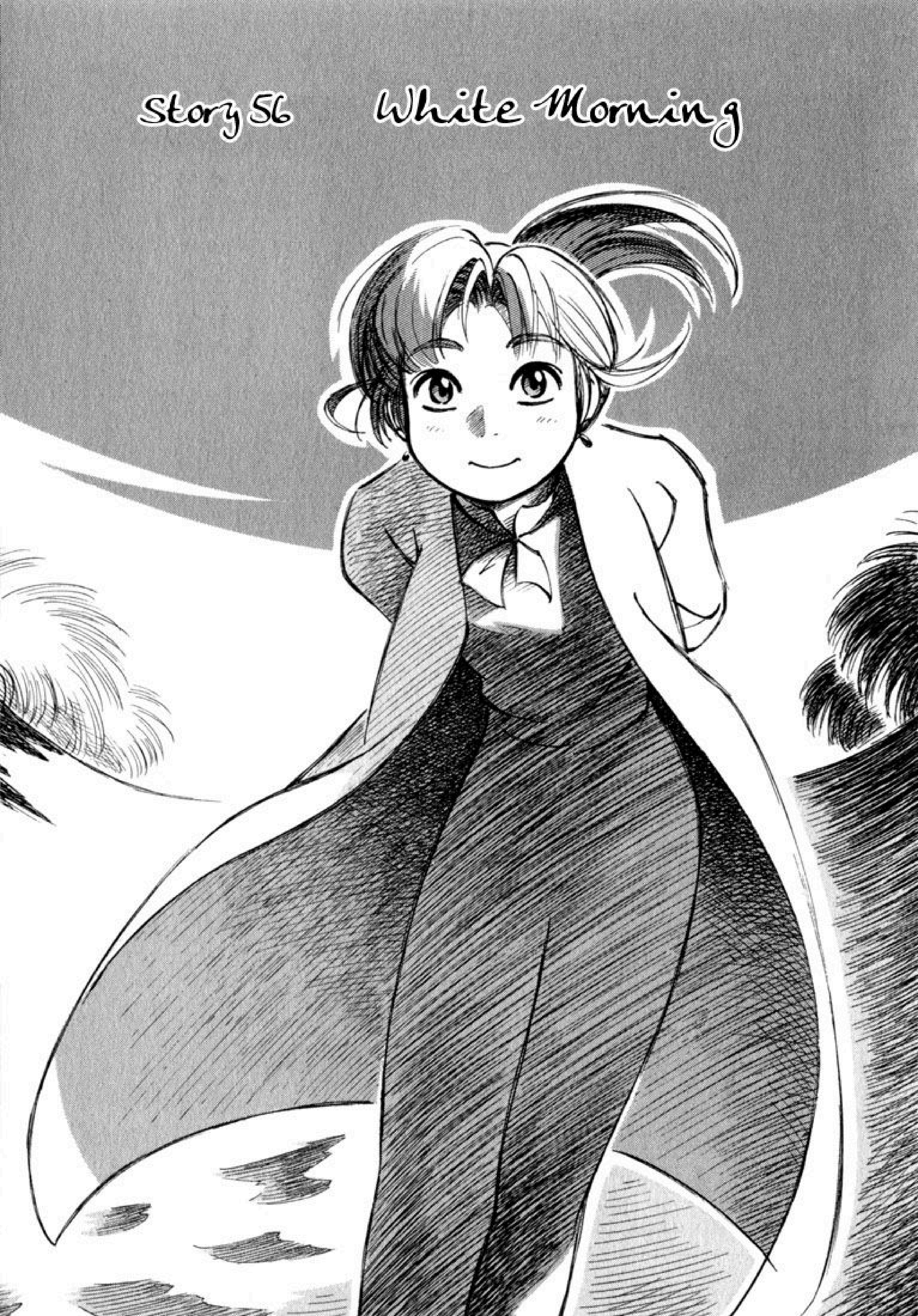

THERE'S SOMEONE ON THE ROAD.


...IT'S TAKA-HIRO.
HE'S LOOKING THIS WAY.


!
YAWN ......


MM?
ALPHA, Y'KNOW...
TO TELL THE TRUTH, RECENTLY AROUND HERE...
I SAW SOMETHING WHITE FLOATING...
S-STOP IT, YOU'RE SCARING ME.

Story 55 - End


Story 56 White Morning


THE USUAL TOWN PARTY STILL ISN'T OVER, SO I'M TAKING REFUGE AT ALPHA'S PLACE.
IT'S AN AMAZINGLY CLEAR DAY.
THE SKY IS A DEEP, DARK BLUE.

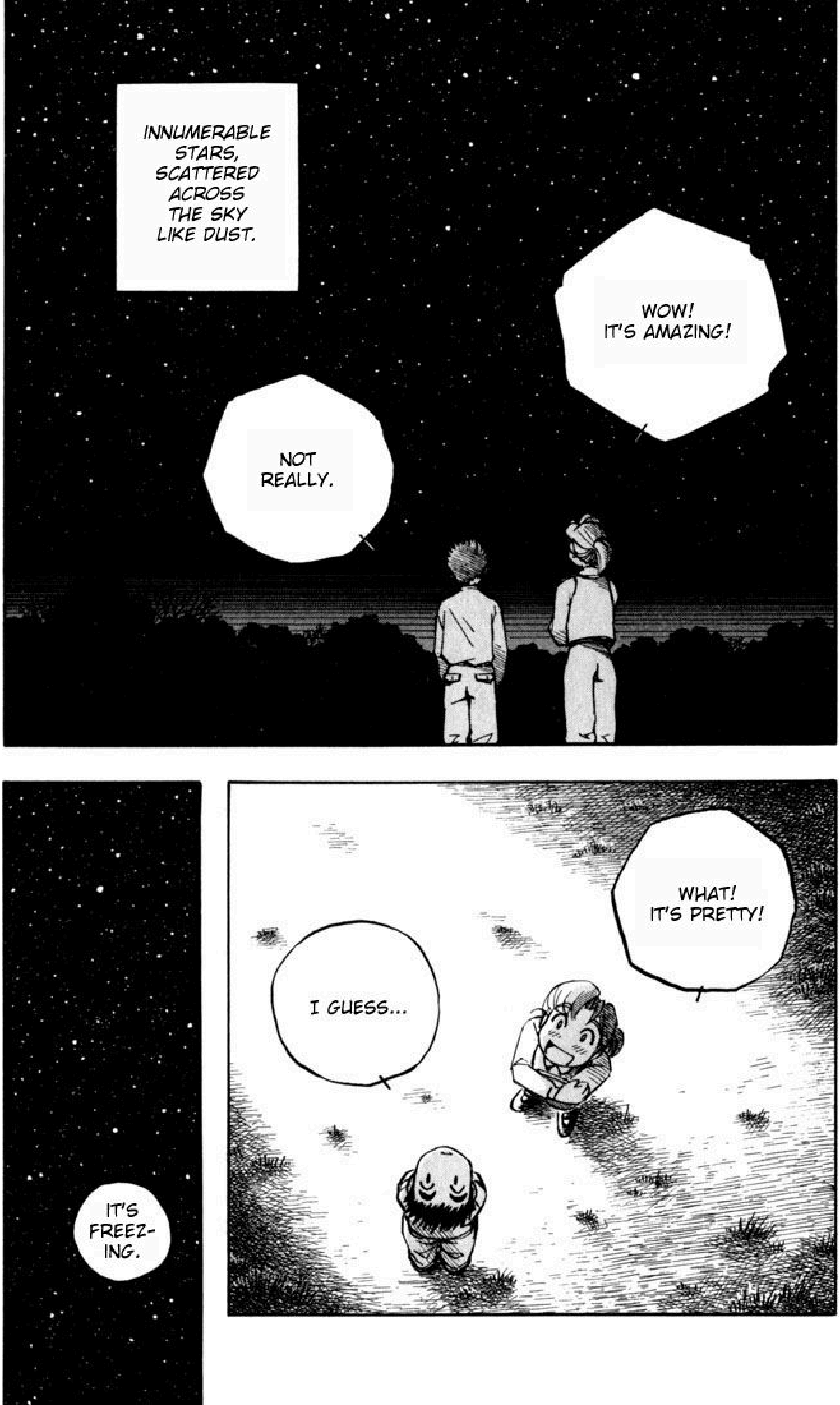



AS NIGHT FALLS, IT SUDDENLY TURNS CHILLY.


THE INNUMERABLE DISTANT LIGHTS GLITTER IN THE DARKNESS.

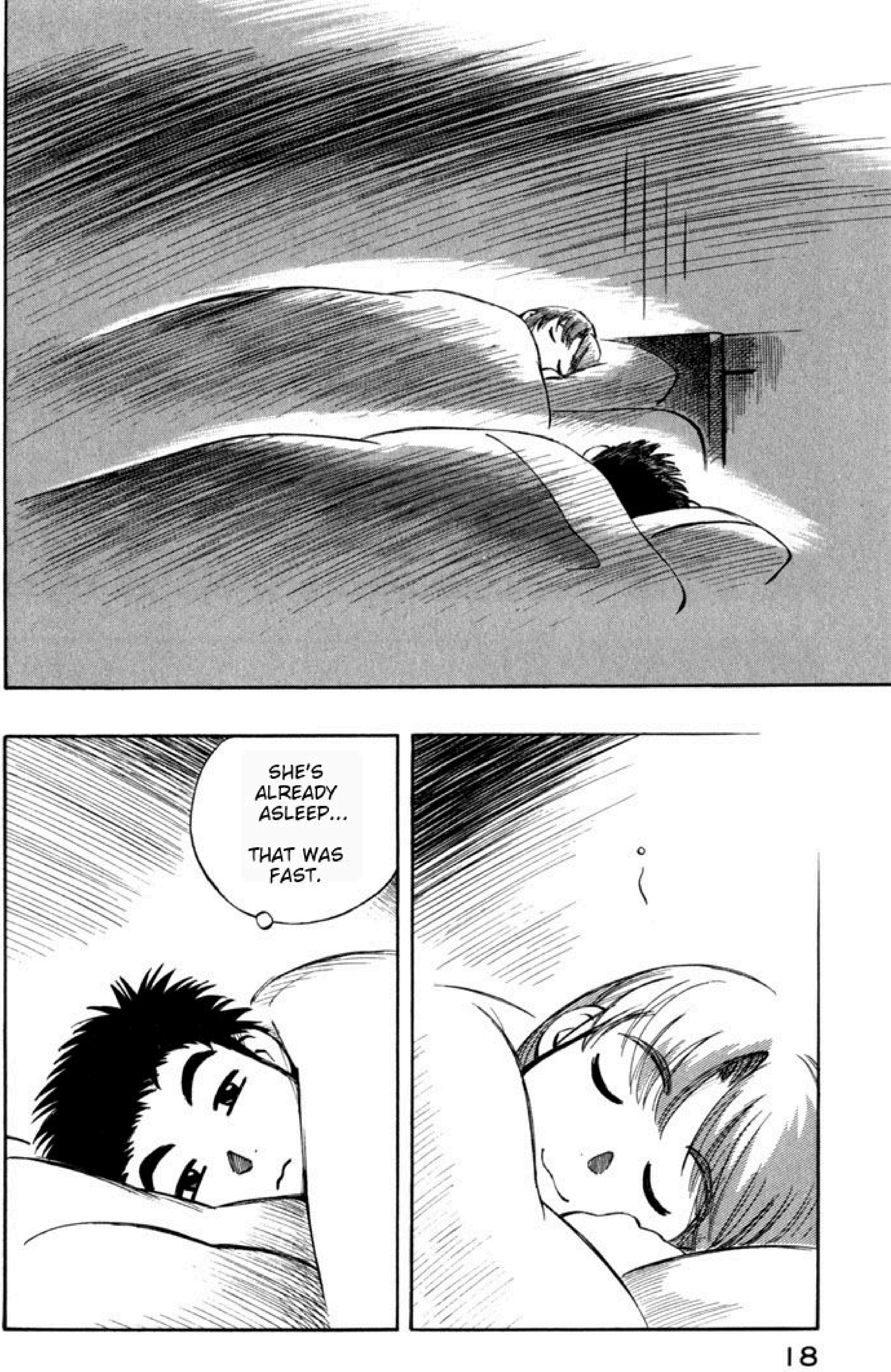

IT'S FREEZ-ING
OPEN
TAKAHIRO! COME HERE!
ALPHA, IT'S FREEZING.
closed




INNUMERABLE STARS, SCATTERED ACROSS THE SKY LIKE DUST.
WOW! IT'S AMAZING!
NOT REALLY.
WHAT! IT'S PRETTY!
I GUESS...
IT'S FREEZ-ING.


THIS DOESN'T SEEM TO BE HEATING THE PLACE UP VERY MUCH.
YEAH... I GUESS THIS HEATER JUST ISN'T ENOUGH BY ITSELF.
LET'S GET OUT THE FUTONS NOW.
DO YOU WANT ME TO HEAT A BATH?
NO, THAT'S OKAY.


AH... IT'S NO GOOD, THE FUTON IS MAKING ME SLEEPY.
ME TOO... I'M ABOUT TO FALL ASLEEP...
WE CAN DO SOMETHING IN THE MORNING.
.....


SHE'S ALREADY ASLEEP...
THAT WAS FAST.


MMM...


...
ぶるっ
......
!
びくっ
TAKAHIRO!!

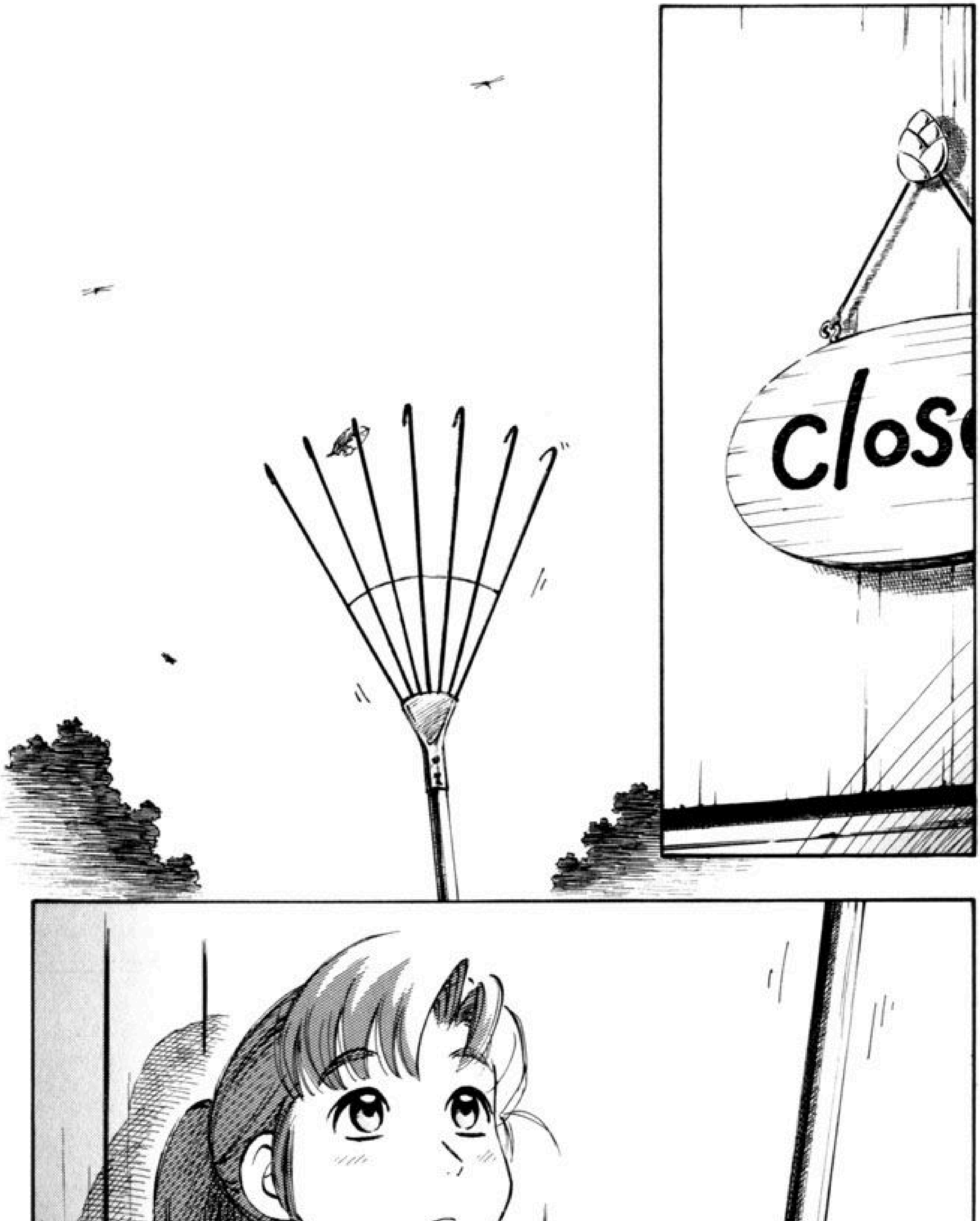

AH, YOU'RE AWAKE!?
COME LOOK AT THIS!! IT'S INCRED-IBLE!!
COME ON, COME ON!!
IT'S LIKE ANOTHER WORLD!
ばたばた
.........
?
CLACK
TAKAHIRO-O-OOO!!


LOOK! FROST!
EVERYTHING IS WHITE!

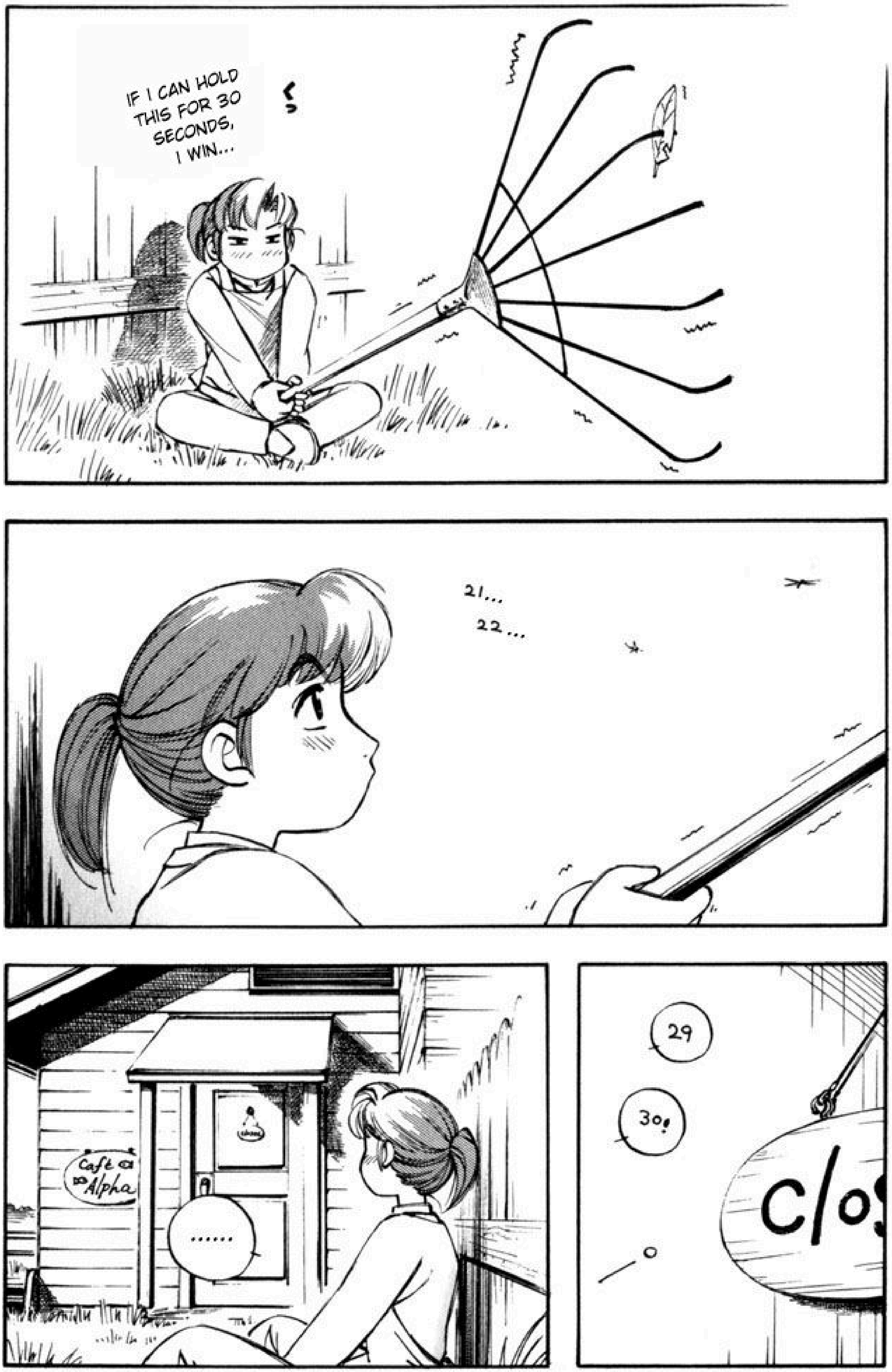

IT'S AMAZING.
IT'S SO PRETTY!

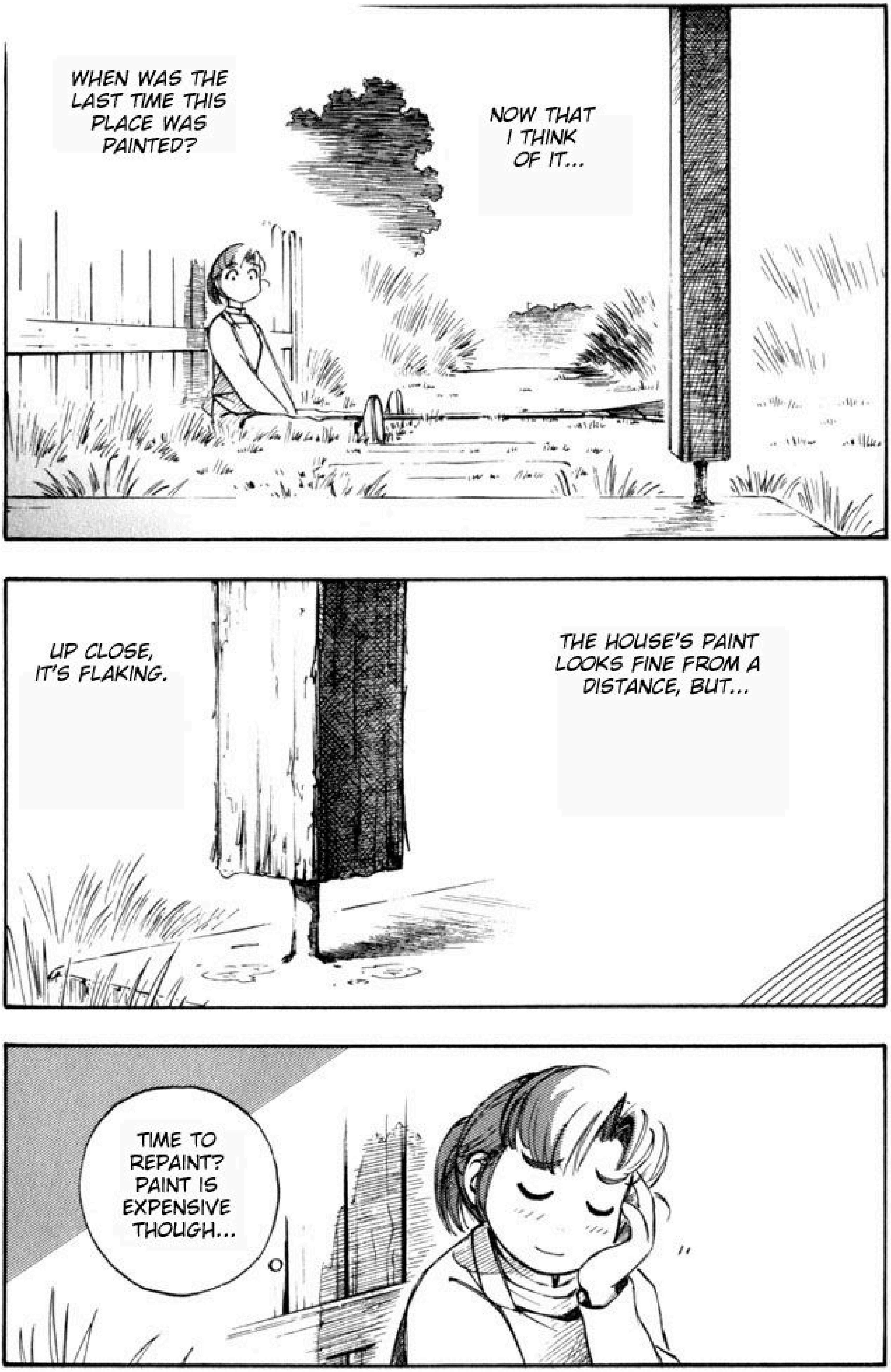

...YEAH.
A FROST COVERED MORNING.


Story 57 White Paint


clos


IT'S SPRING...
CLEAR SKY. NO WIND.
SPRING DRAGONFLIES AND SMALL, FLYING INSECTS THAT I DON'T RECOGNIZE.
BZZZZ

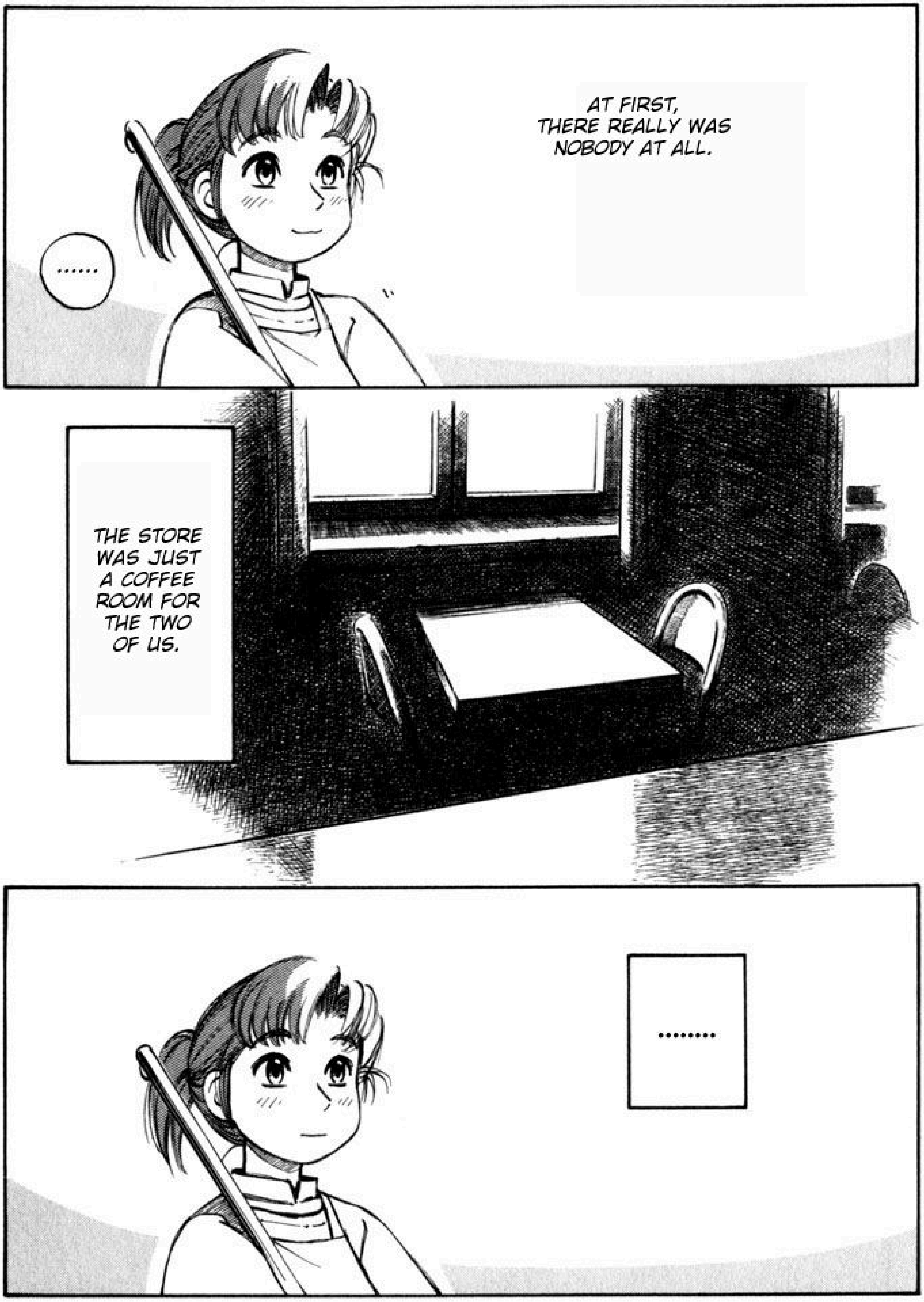

IF I CAN HOLD THIS FOR 30 SECONDS, I WIN...
21...
22...
Café Alpha
......
29
30!

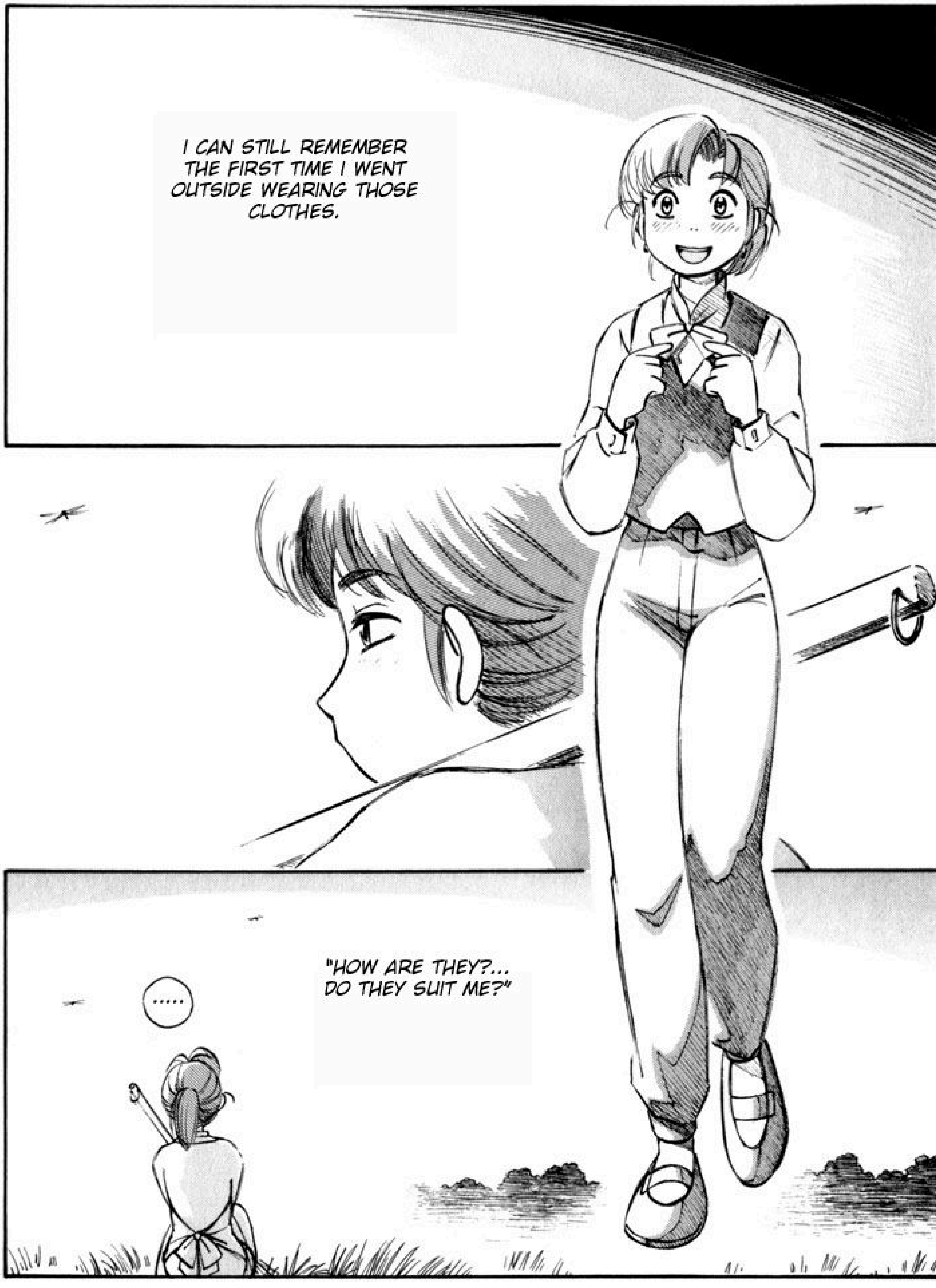

NOW THAT I THINK OF IT...
WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME THIS PLACE WAS PAINTED?
THE HOUSE'S PAINT LOOKS FINE FROM A DISTANCE, BUT...
UP CLOSE, IT'S FLAKING.
TIME TO REPAINT? PAINT IS EXPENSIVE THOUGH...


THE SHOP WAS ORIGINALLY ADDED ON AS A LIVING ROOM.
ALTHOUGH IT ENDED UP BEING USED FOR LAUNDRY AND RAISING CACTI.
BY THAT TIME, I WAS ALDREADY HERE.
OWNER TOLD ME THAT, A LONG TIME AGO.

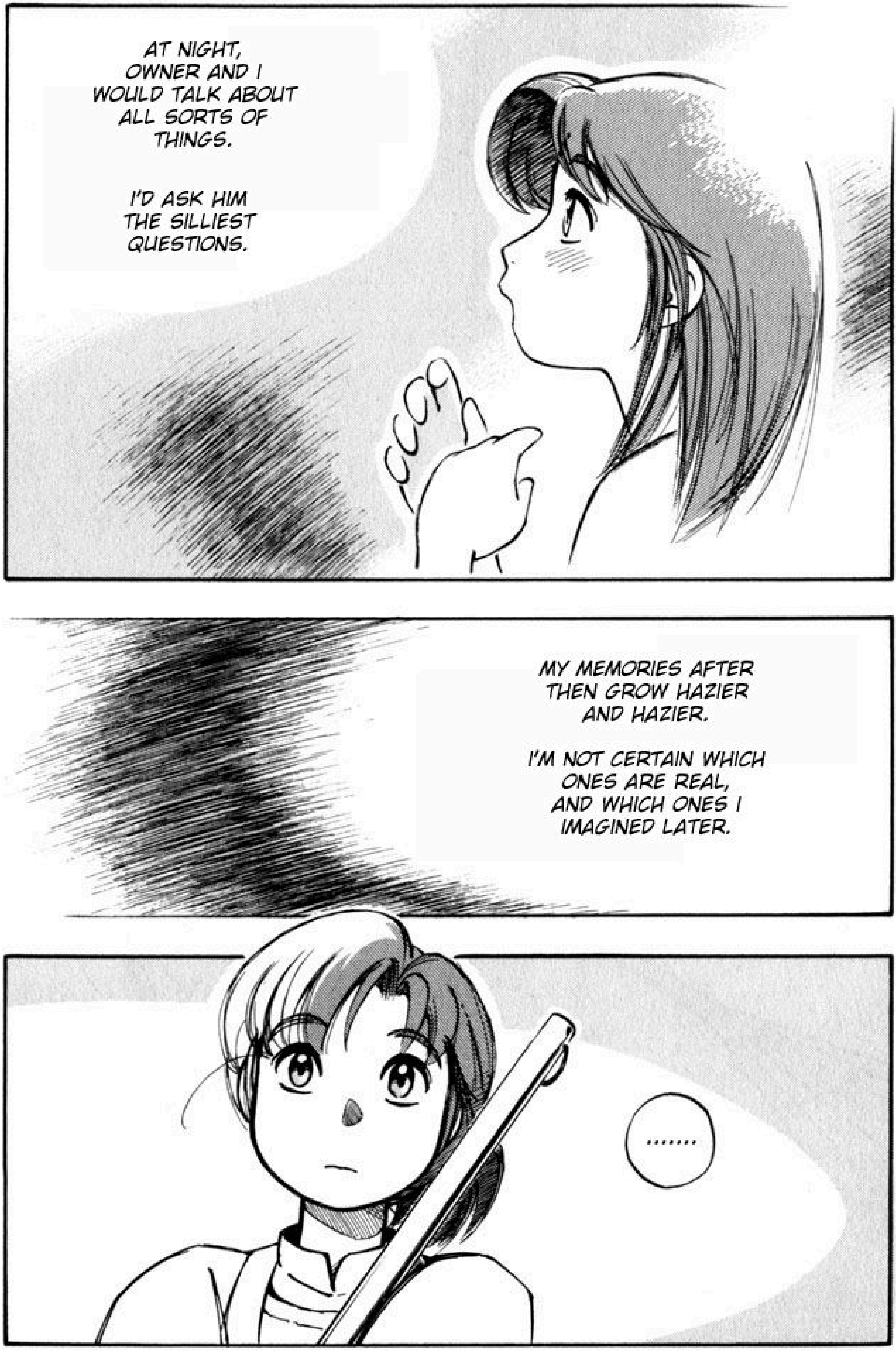

THEY'VE BLENDED TOGETHER NOW, THE HOUSE AND THE STORE.
IT'S PRETTY RUN DOWN.
I'D LIKE TO DO SOME REMODEL-ING.
I'LL BET IT'S EXPENSIVE THOUGH...

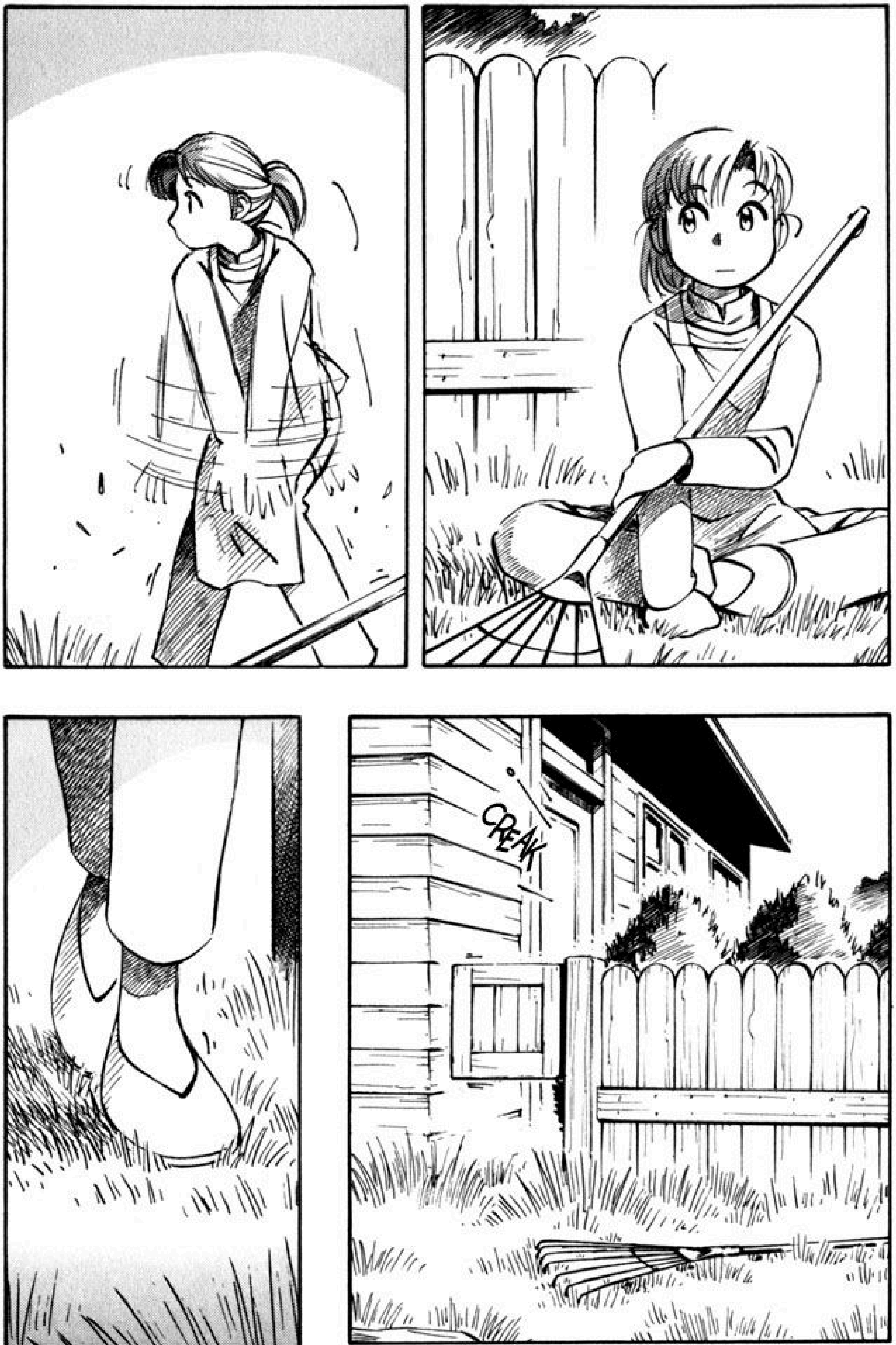

THIS ROOM HAS BEEN A SHOP FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER.
I WONDER WHY OWNER DECIDED TO START A SHOP IN THIS PLACE.
THERE ARE NEVER ANY CUSTOMERS!
........


AT FIRST, THERE REALLY WAS NOBODY AT ALL.
......
THE STORE WAS JUST A COFFEE ROOM FOR THE TWO OF US.
.........

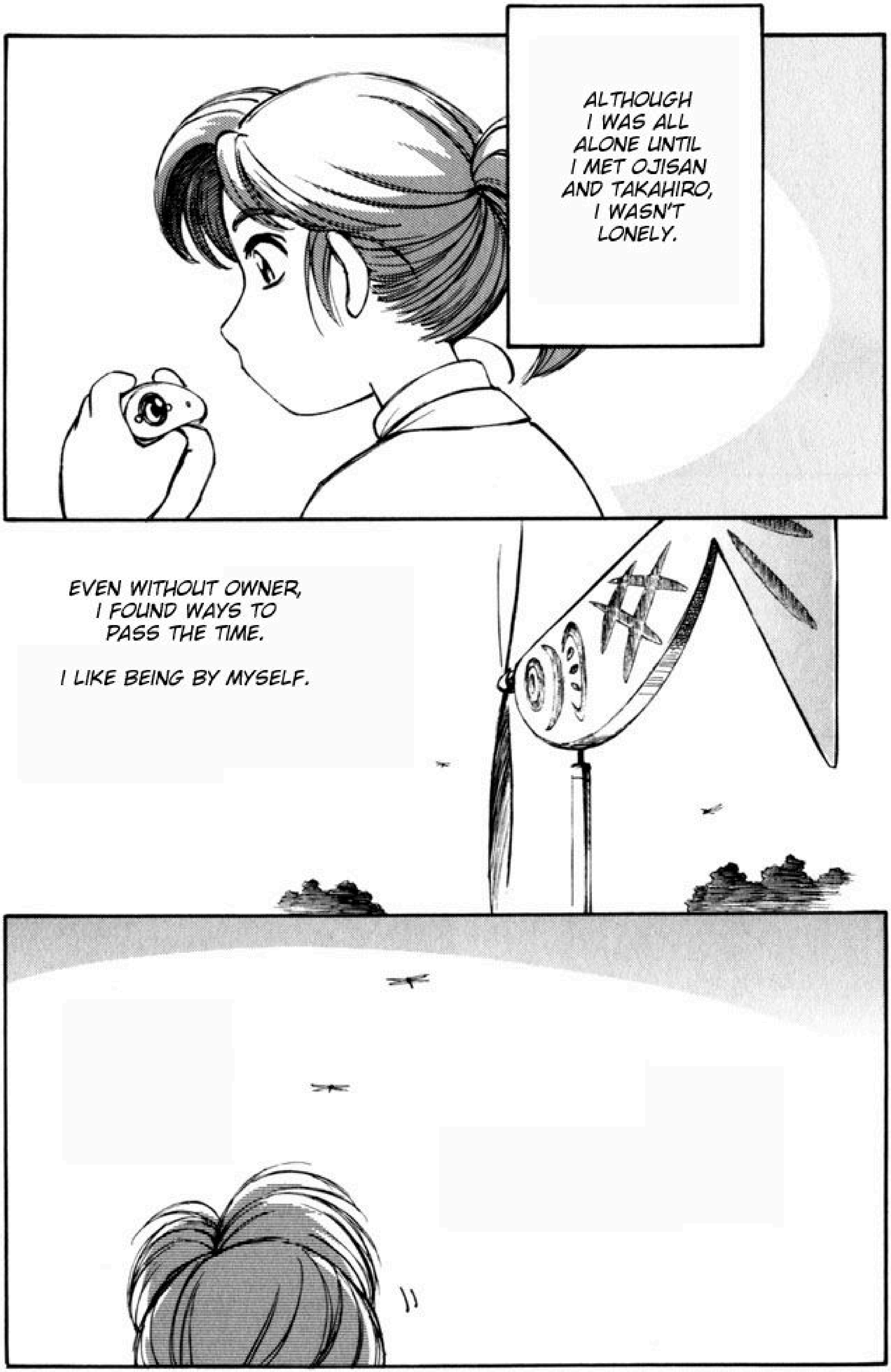

I CAN STILL REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I WENT OUTSIDE WEARING THOSE CLOTHES.
"HOW ARE THEY?... DO THEY SUIT ME?"
......


AH...
I WAS ALWAYS
IN SUCH A
HURRY IN
THOSE DAYS.
I COULDN'T
WAIT FOR
CLOSING
TIME.


AT NIGHT, OWNER AND I WOULD TALK ABOUT ALL SORTS OF THINGS.
I'D ASK HIM THE SILLIEST QUESTIONS.
MY MEMORIES AFTER THEN GROW HAZIER AND HAZIER.
I'M NOT CERTAIN WHICH ONES ARE REAL, AND WHICH ONES I IMAGINED LATER.
.......

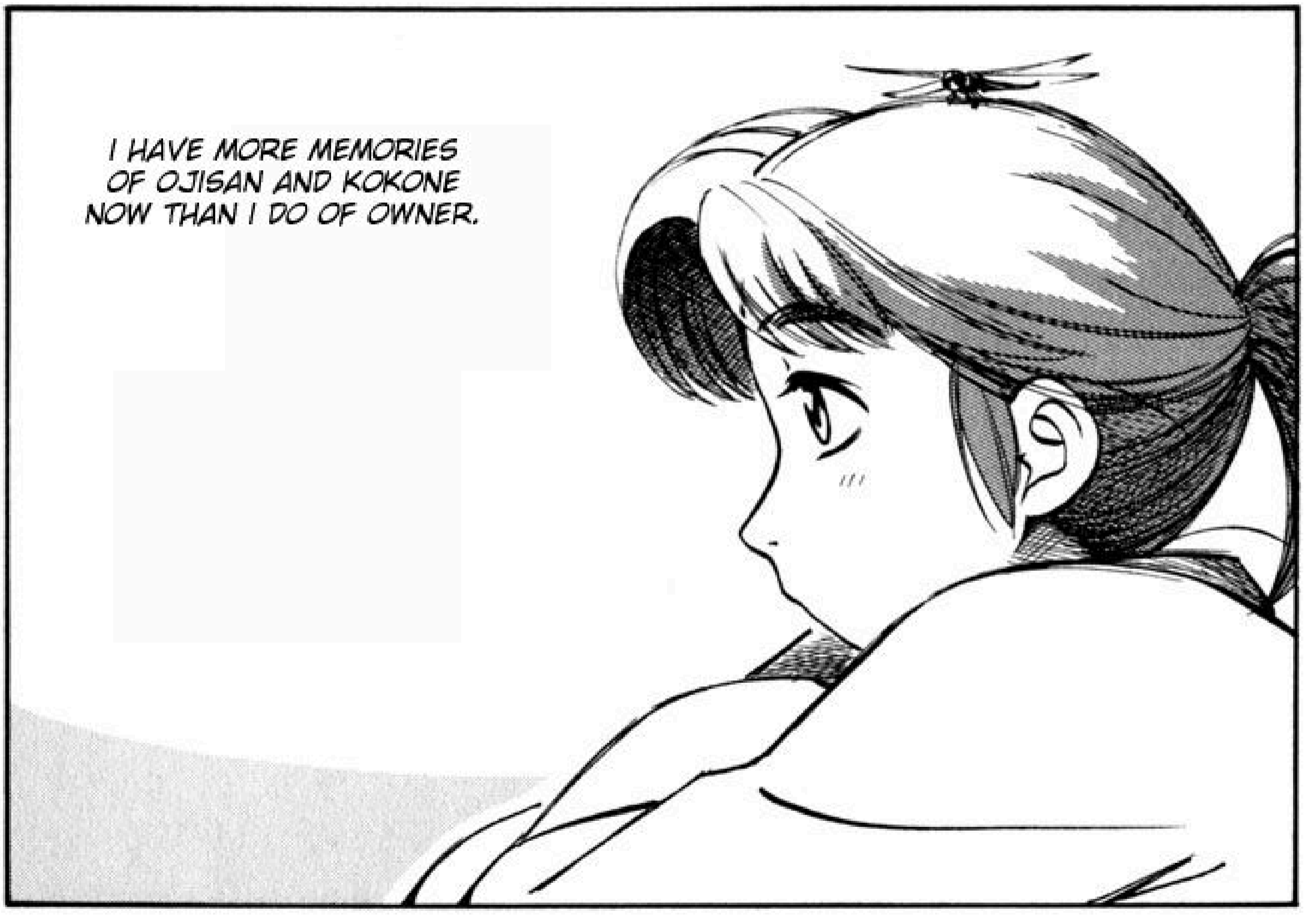

CREAK

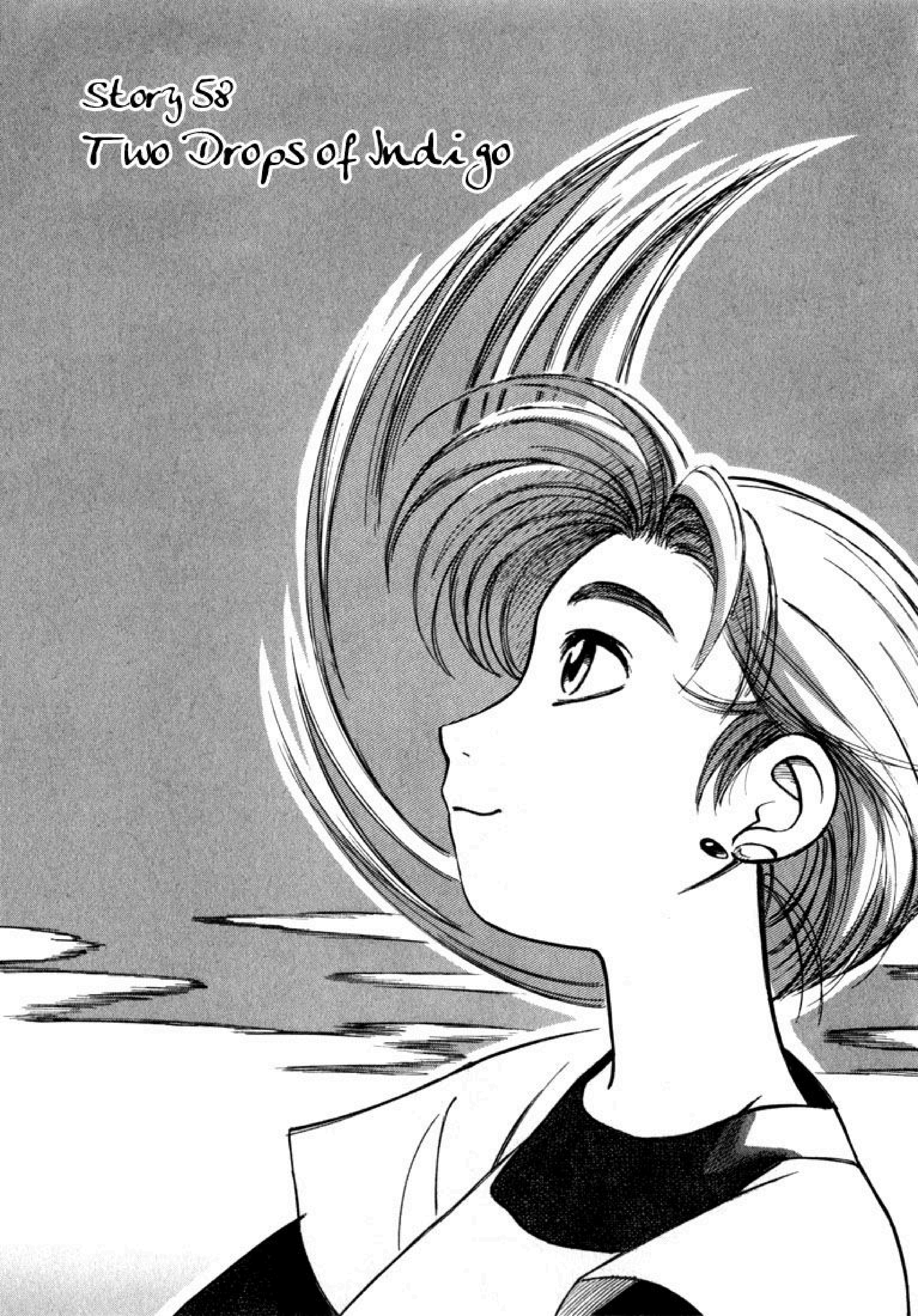

CLICK
closed
café Alpha
I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM OWNER SINCE HE SENT THE CAMERA.
CLICK
café Alpha


ALTHOUGH I WAS ALL ALONE UNTIL I MET OJISAN AND TAKAHIRO, I WASN'T LONELY.
EVEN WITHOUT OWNER, I FOUND WAYS TO PASS THE TIME.
I LIKE BEING BY MYSELF.

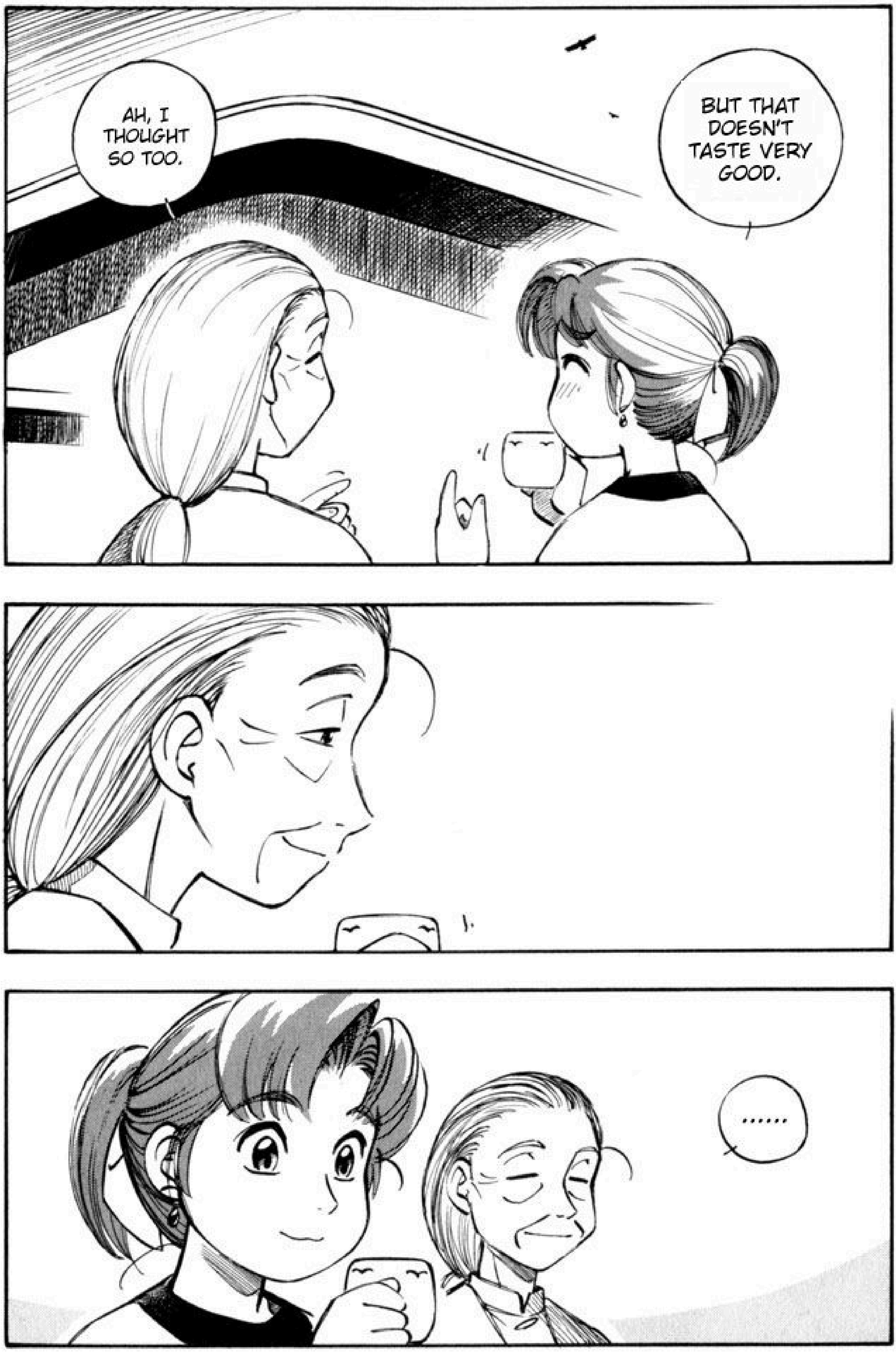


I HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT OWNER IN A LONG TIME.



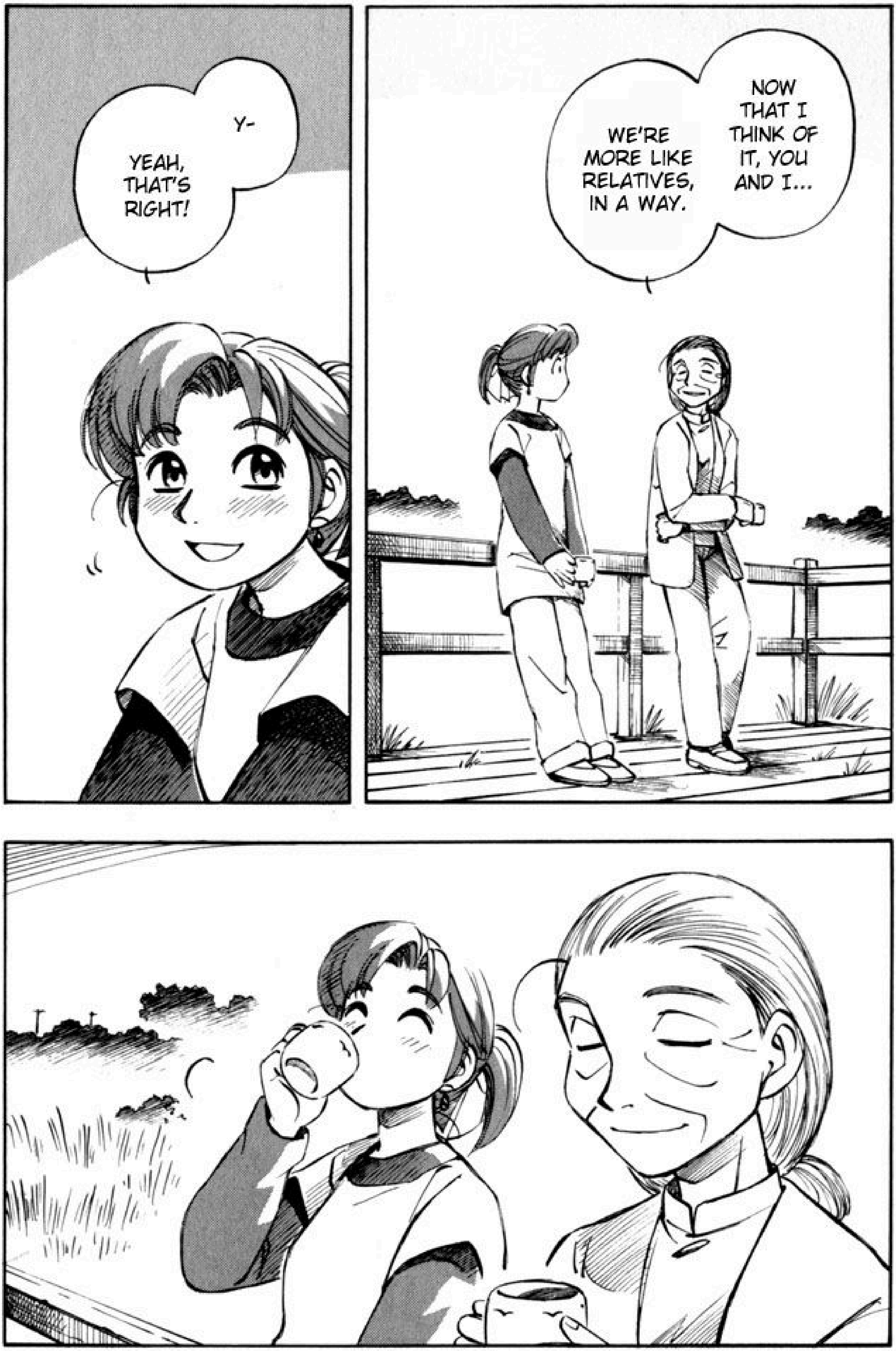

Story 58
Two Drops of Indigo

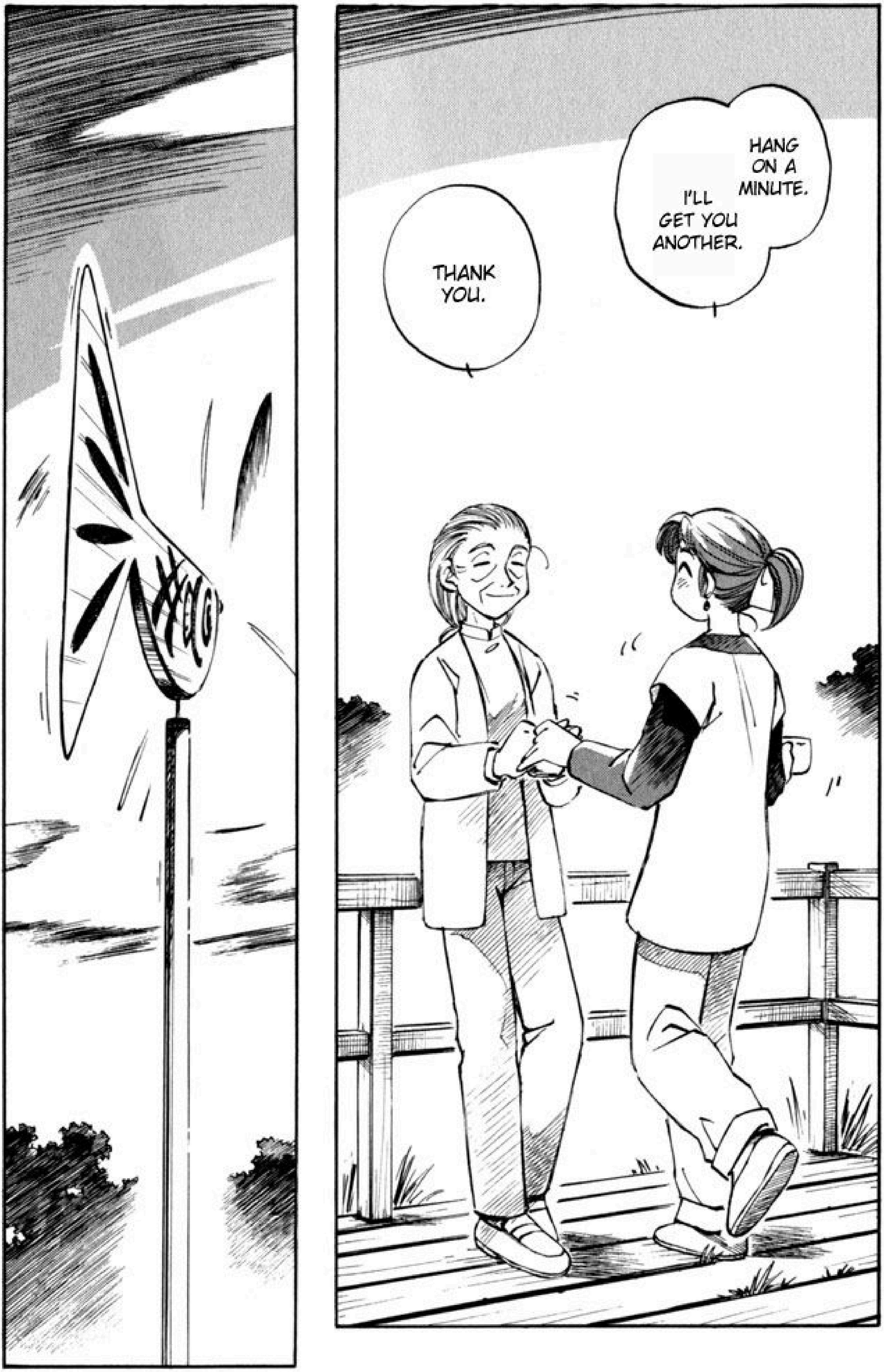



BUT THAT DOESN'T TASTE VERY GOOD.
AH, I THOUGHT SO TOO.
......

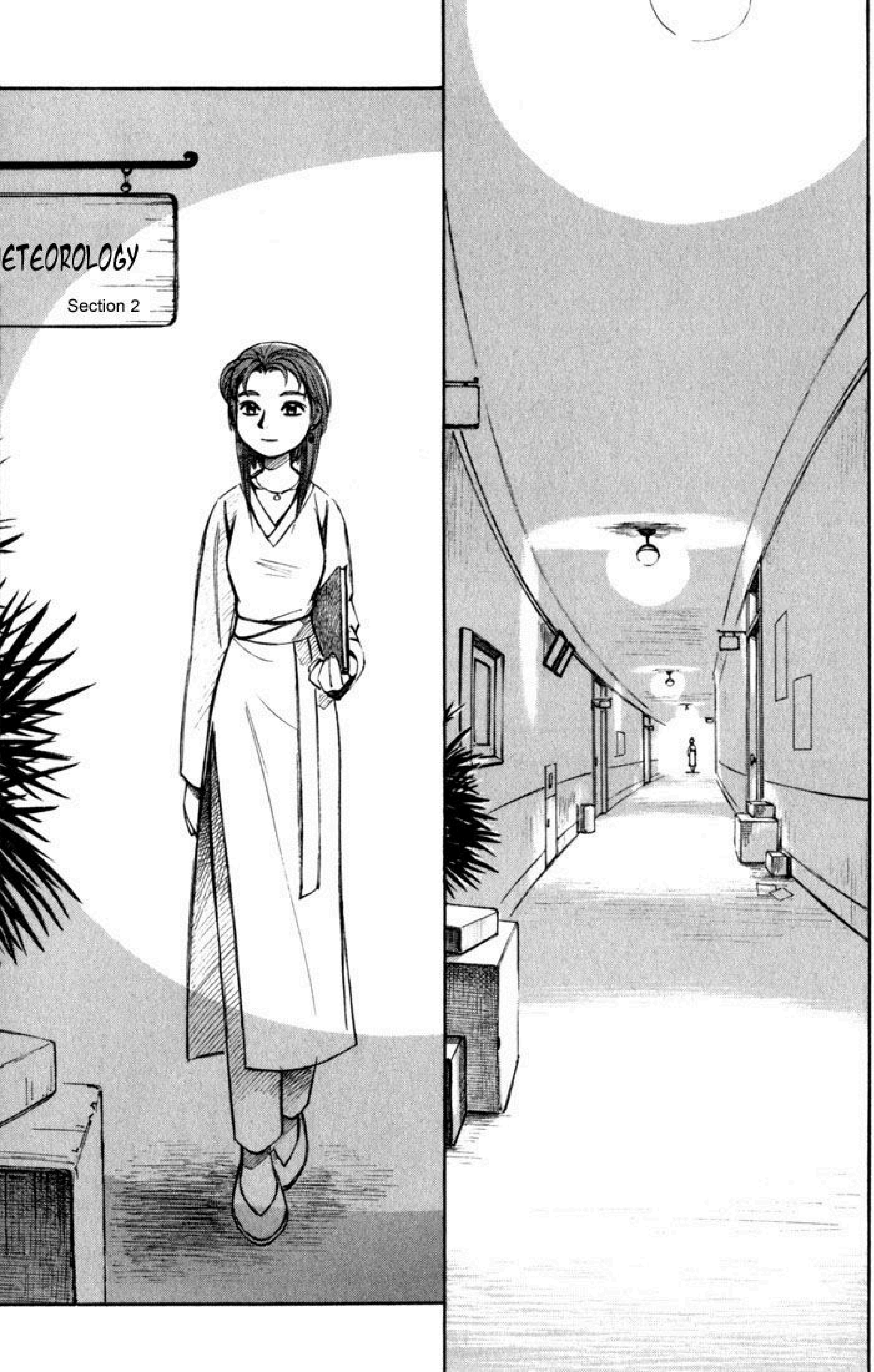

YOU KNOW...
YES?
JUST NOW, FOR A MOMENT...
IT FELT LIKE I WAS TALKING WITH ONE OF MY OLD CLASSMATES.
IT FELT LIKE I WAS DREAMING I WAS BACK IN MY STUDENT DAYS AGAIN.
REALLY?

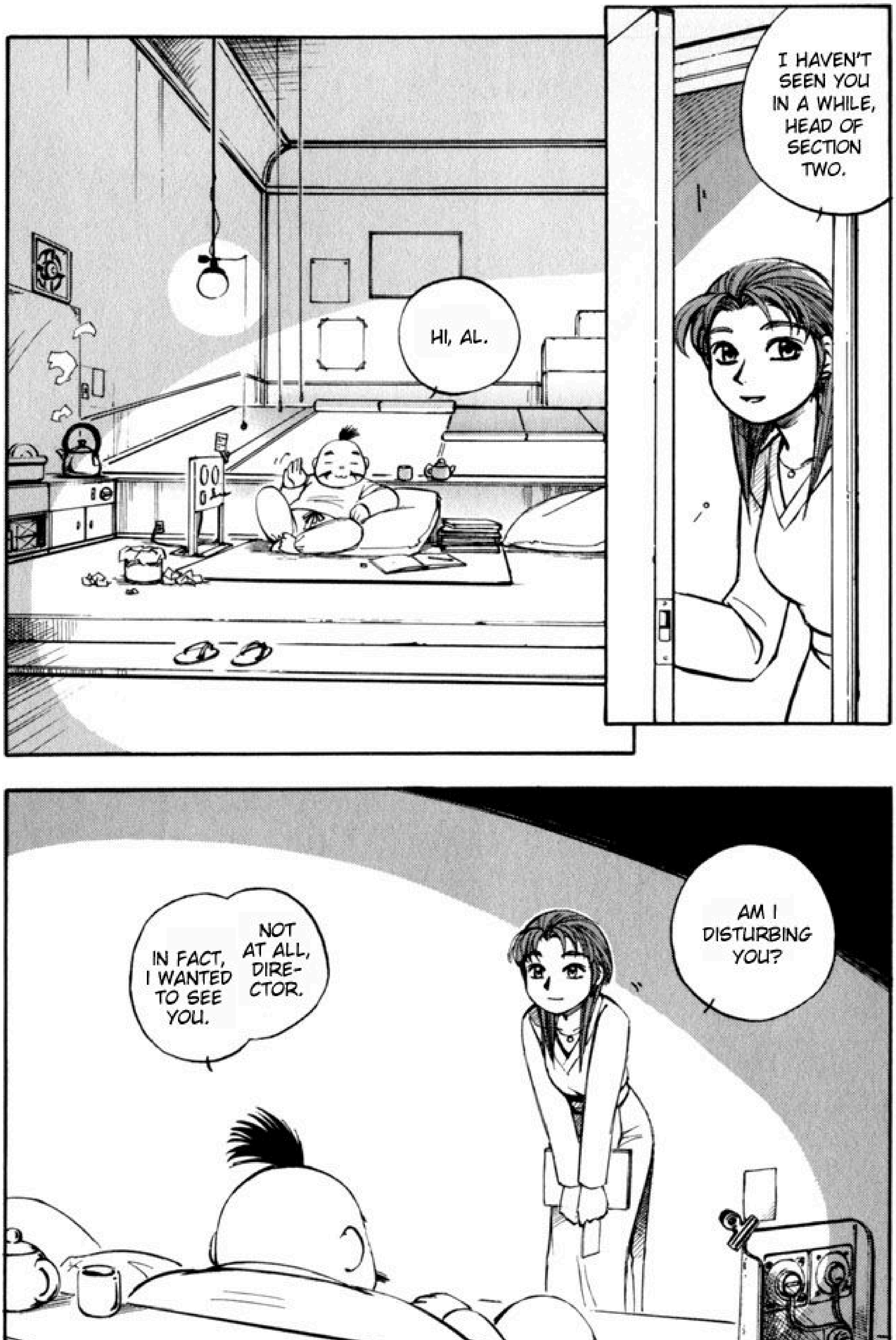

I...
DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO COMPARE IT TO, BUT...
IT FEELS ...
GOOD.


NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, YOU AND I...
WE'RE MORE LIKE RELATIVES, IN A WAY.
Y-
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT!


HANG ON A MINUTE.
I'LL GET YOU ANOTHER.
THANK YOU.

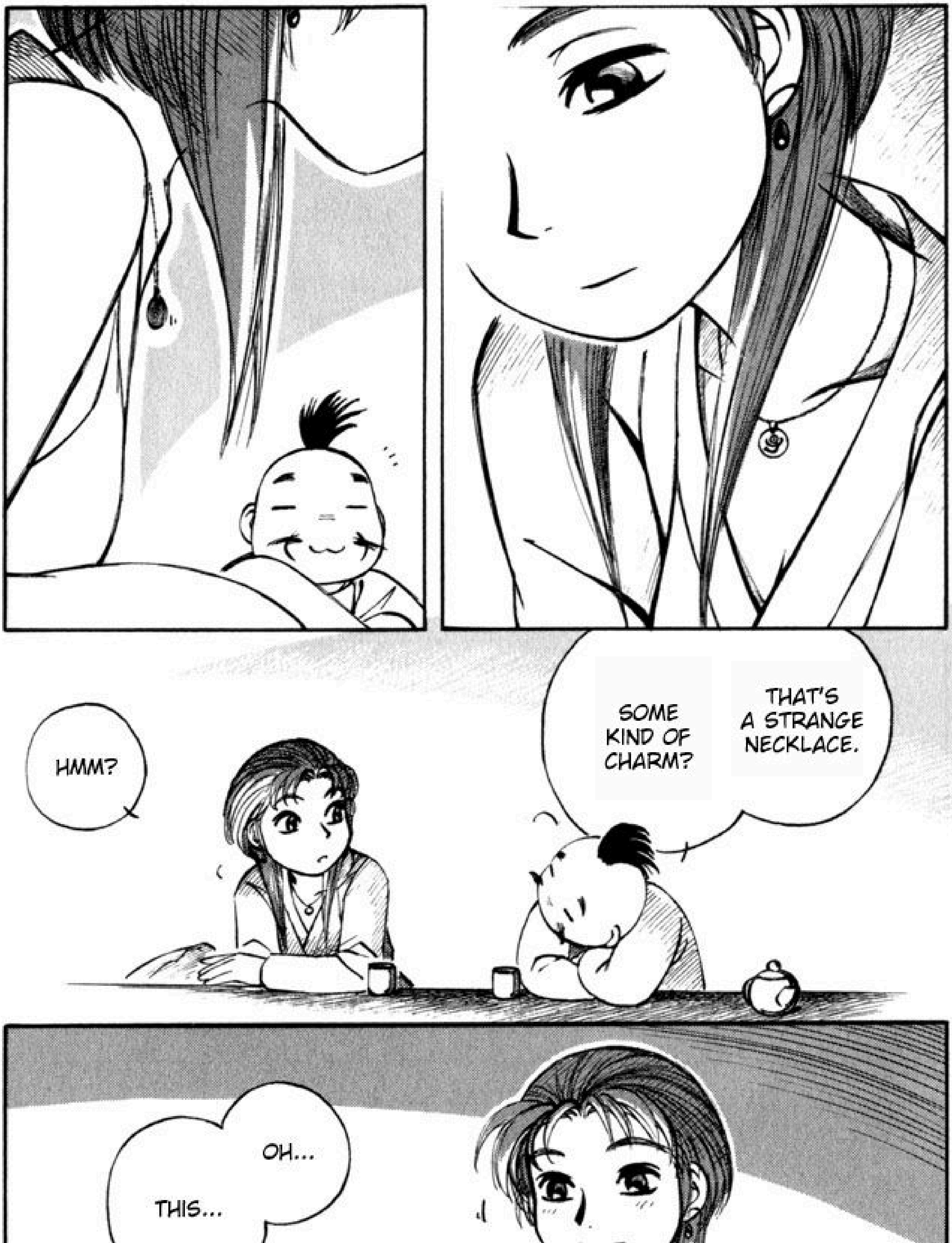


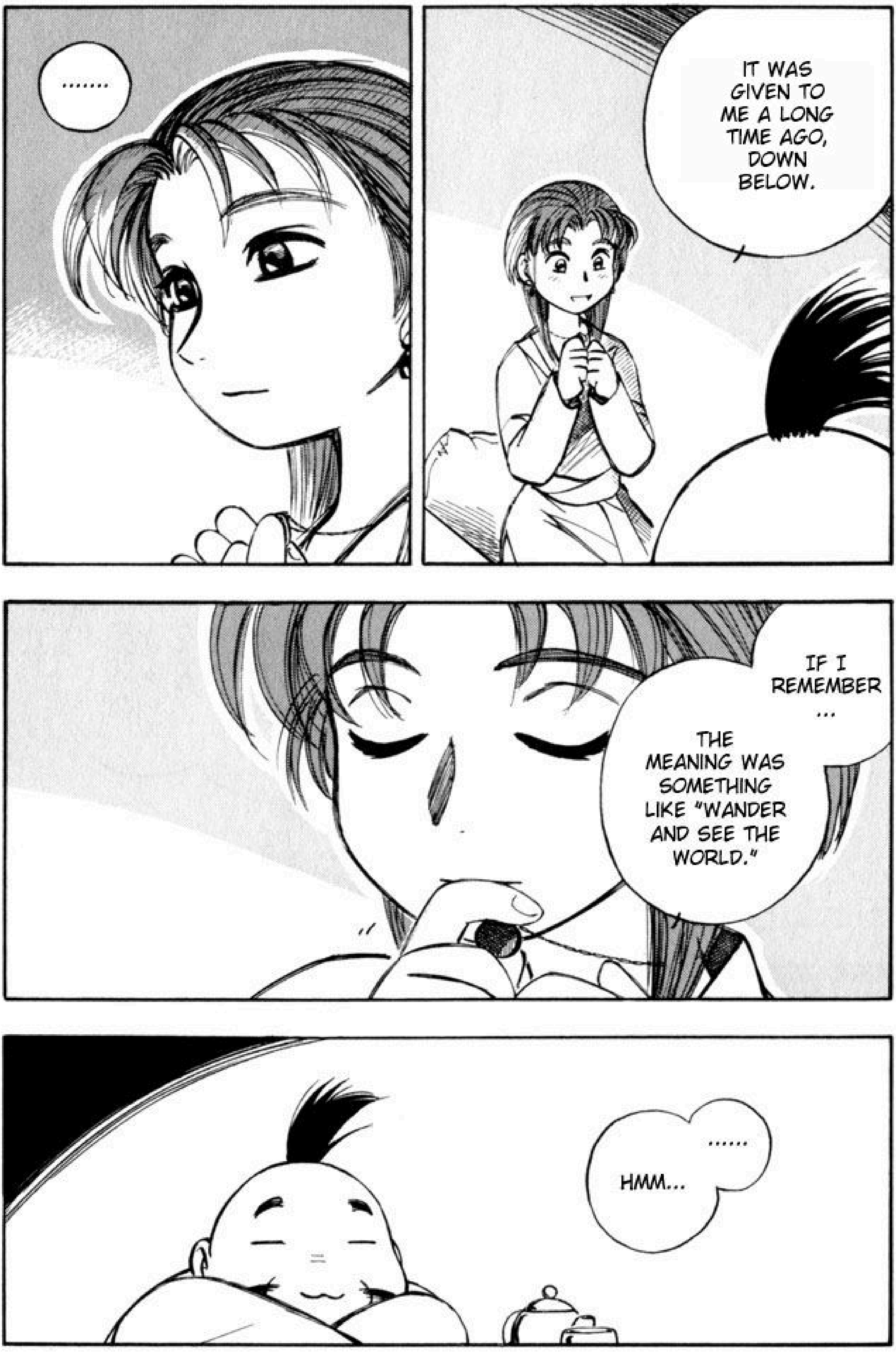

ETEOROLOGY
Section 2


I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN A WHILE, HEAD OF SECTION TWO.
HI, AL.
AM I DISTURBING YOU?
NOT AT ALL, DIRECTOR.
IN FACT, I WANTED TO SEE YOU.

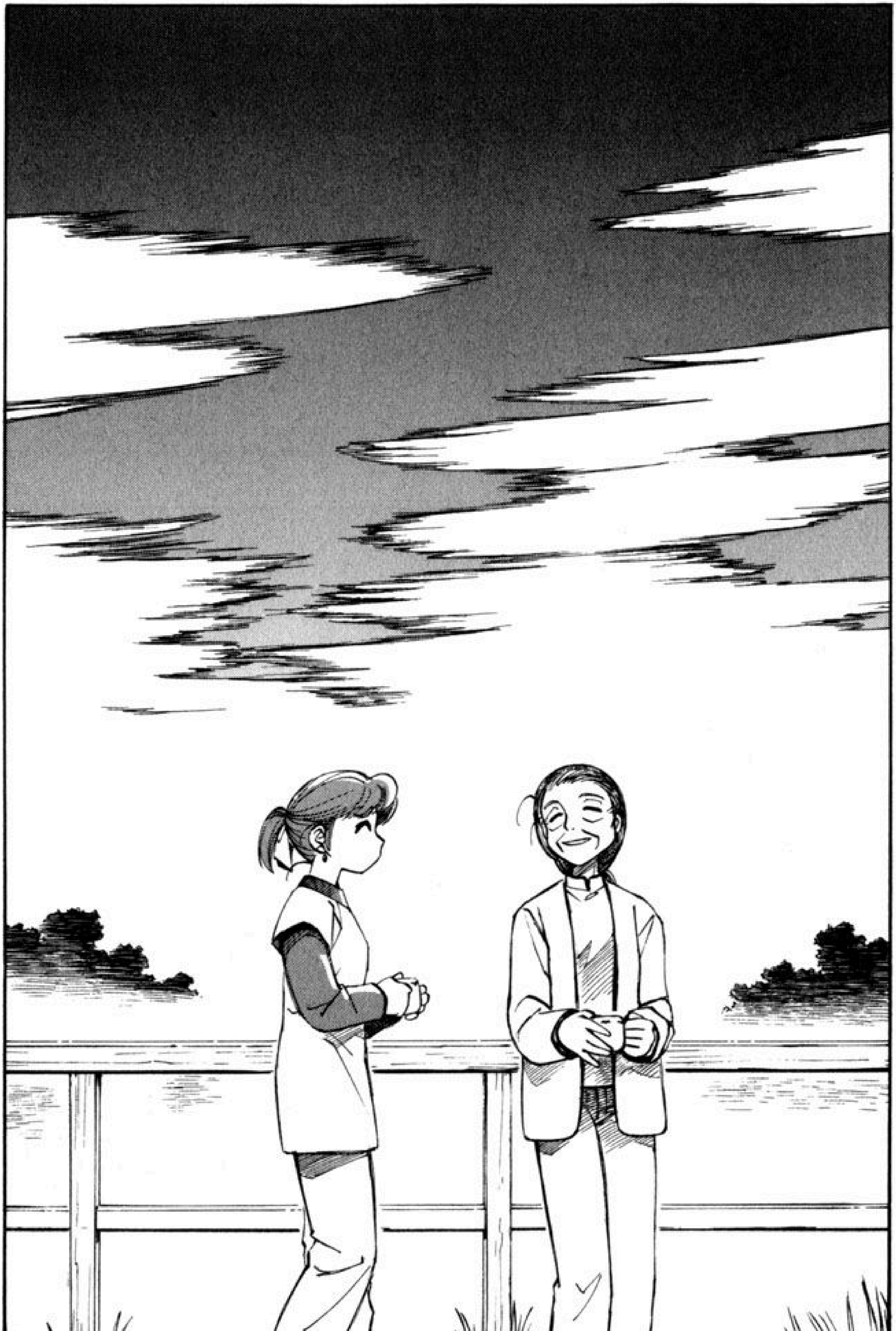

THE SEA TEMPERATURE IS VERY HIGH.
THE RAINS ALONG THE COASTS ARE PROBABLY GOING TO BE QUITE AMAZING.
... WHAT IS IT?
WHAT ABOUT THE INLAND?
NO RAIN, I THINK.
HERE.
I'M AFRAID I ONLY HAVE TEA.
THANK YOU.

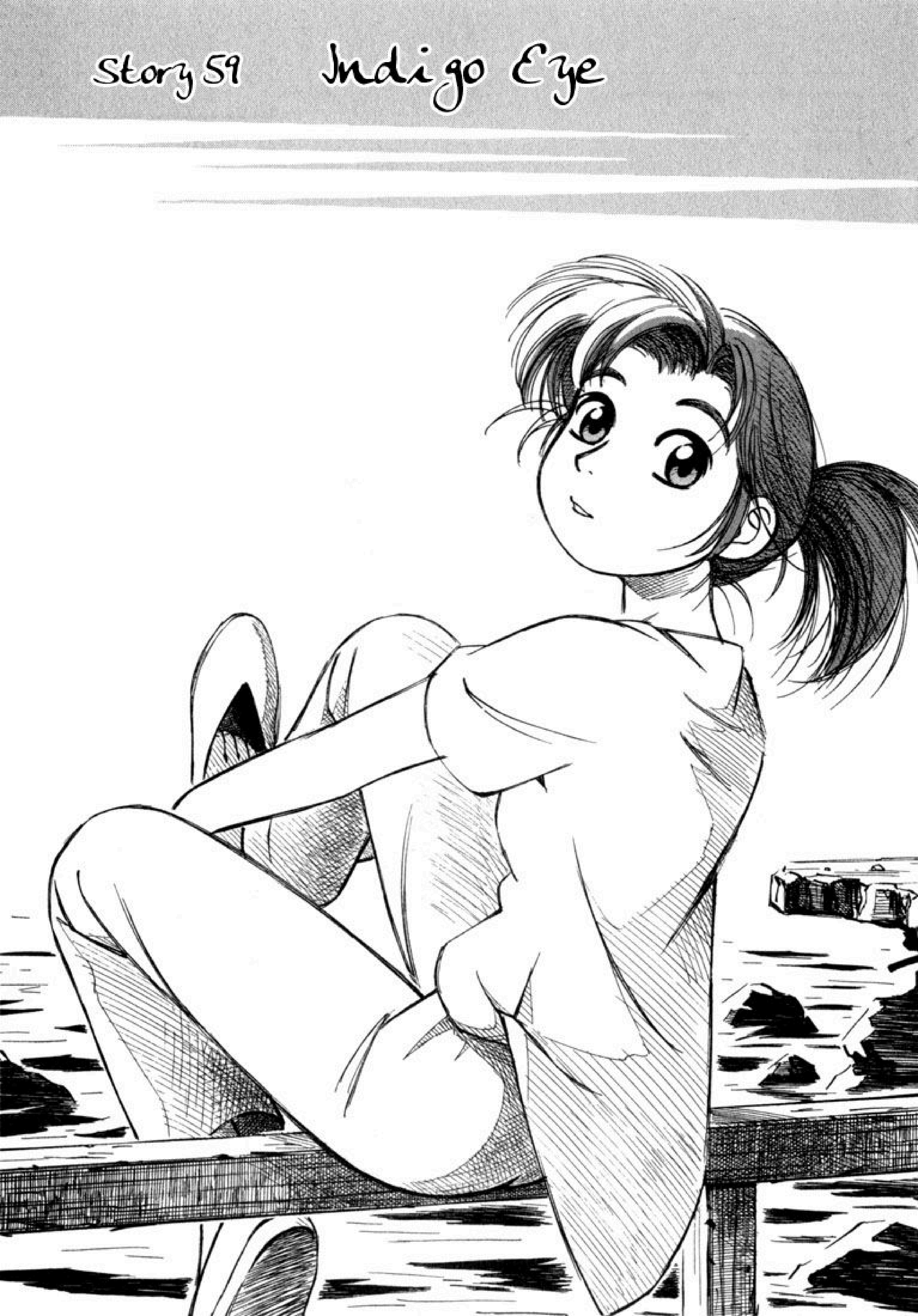


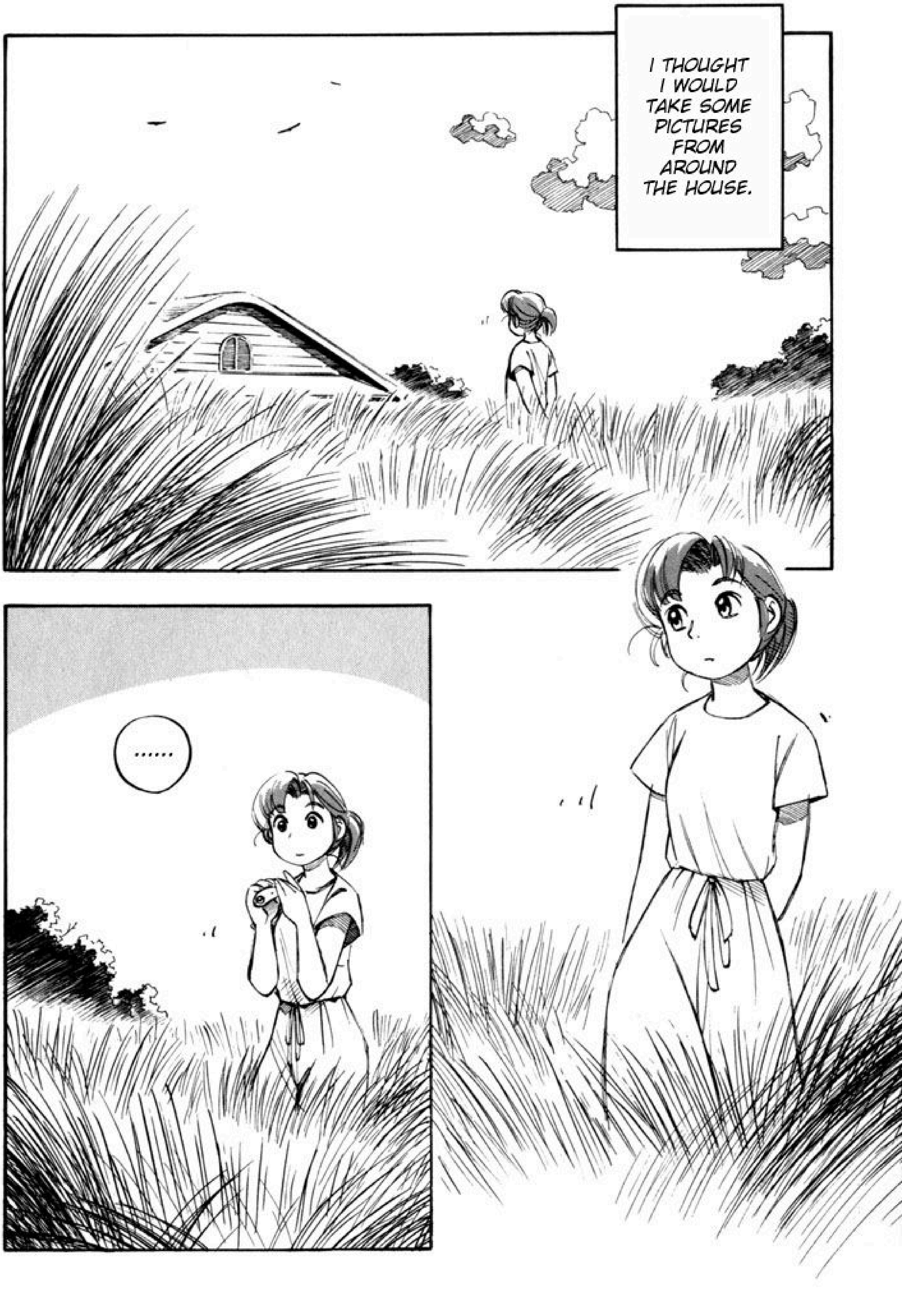

THAT'S A STRANGE NECKLACE.
SOME KIND OF CHARM?
HMM?
OH...
THIS...


IT WAS GIVEN TO ME A LONG TIME AGO, DOWN BELOW.
......
IF I REMEMBER ...
THE MEANING WAS SOMETHING LIKE "WANDER AND SEE THE WORLD."
......
HMM...


HUH.
IT FITS US PERF- ECTLY, DOESN'T IT?
YES...




Story 59
Indigo Eye


I THOUGHT I WOULD TAKE SOME PICTURES FROM AROUND THE HOUSE.
......

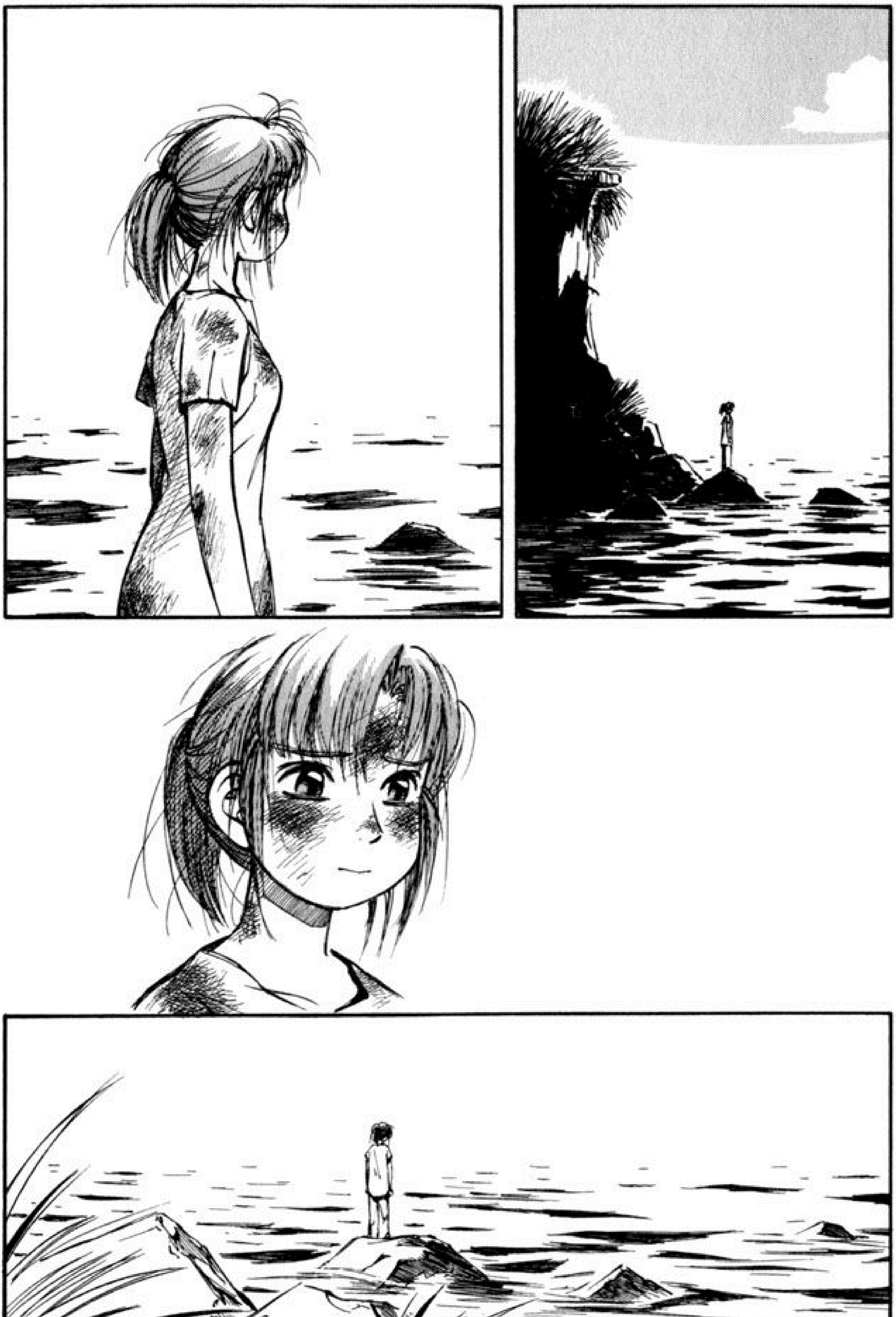

OH, THAT'S RIGHT.
THE FOUNDATION OF THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR IS STILL AROUND HERE.
MAYBE FROM THERE...

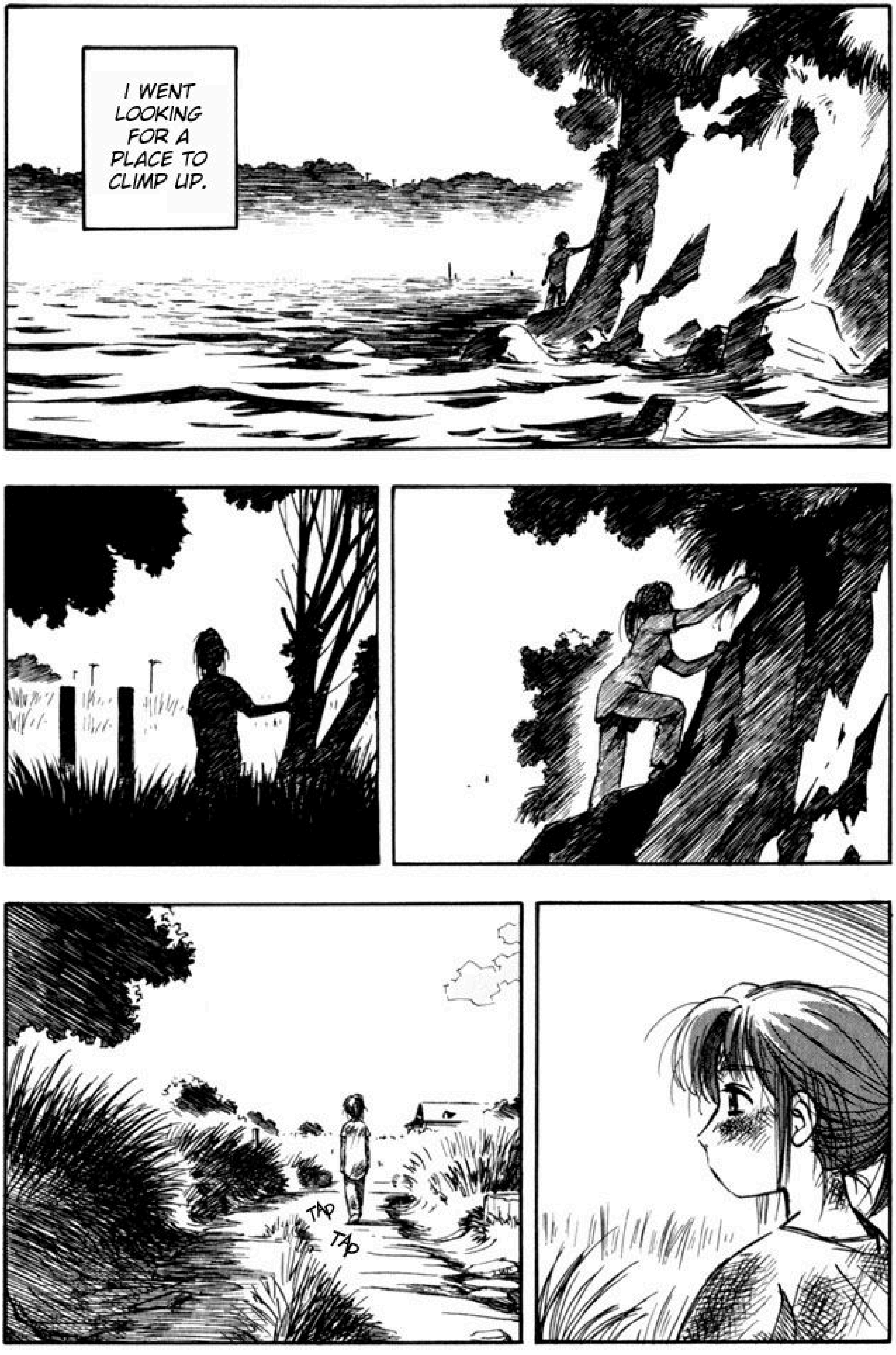


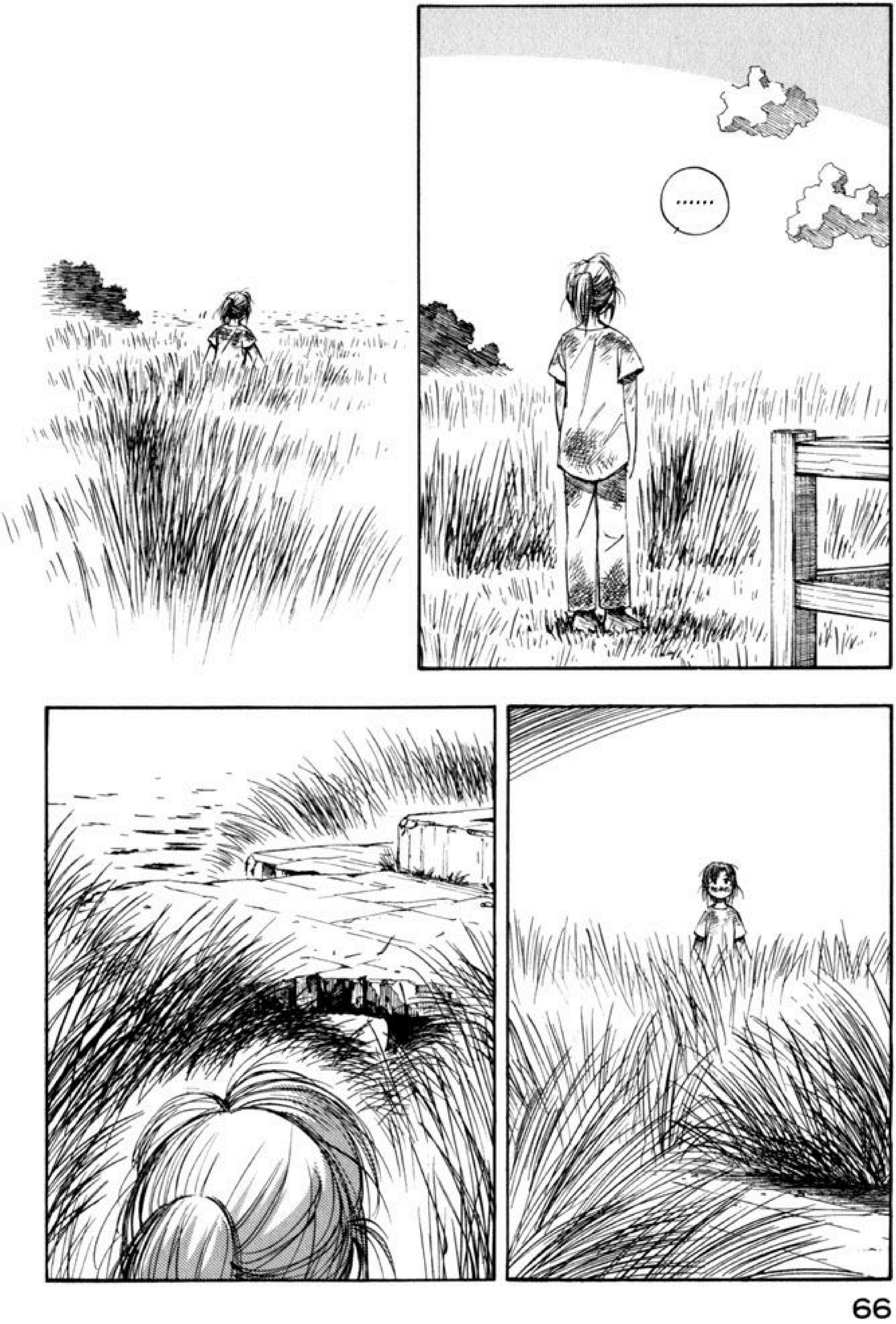

......
THERE'S NO LONGER ANY GROUND UNDER THE FOUNDATION.
OW, OW, OW...
AH!


THE CAMERA!
~~~~!
.......
~~~~


THE SEA IS UNUSUALLY CHOPPY FOR THIS SEASON.
THE WAVES CUT AT THE BANK, AND THE WATER IS MURKY.
I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING.




I WENT LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO CLIMP UP.
TAP
TAP

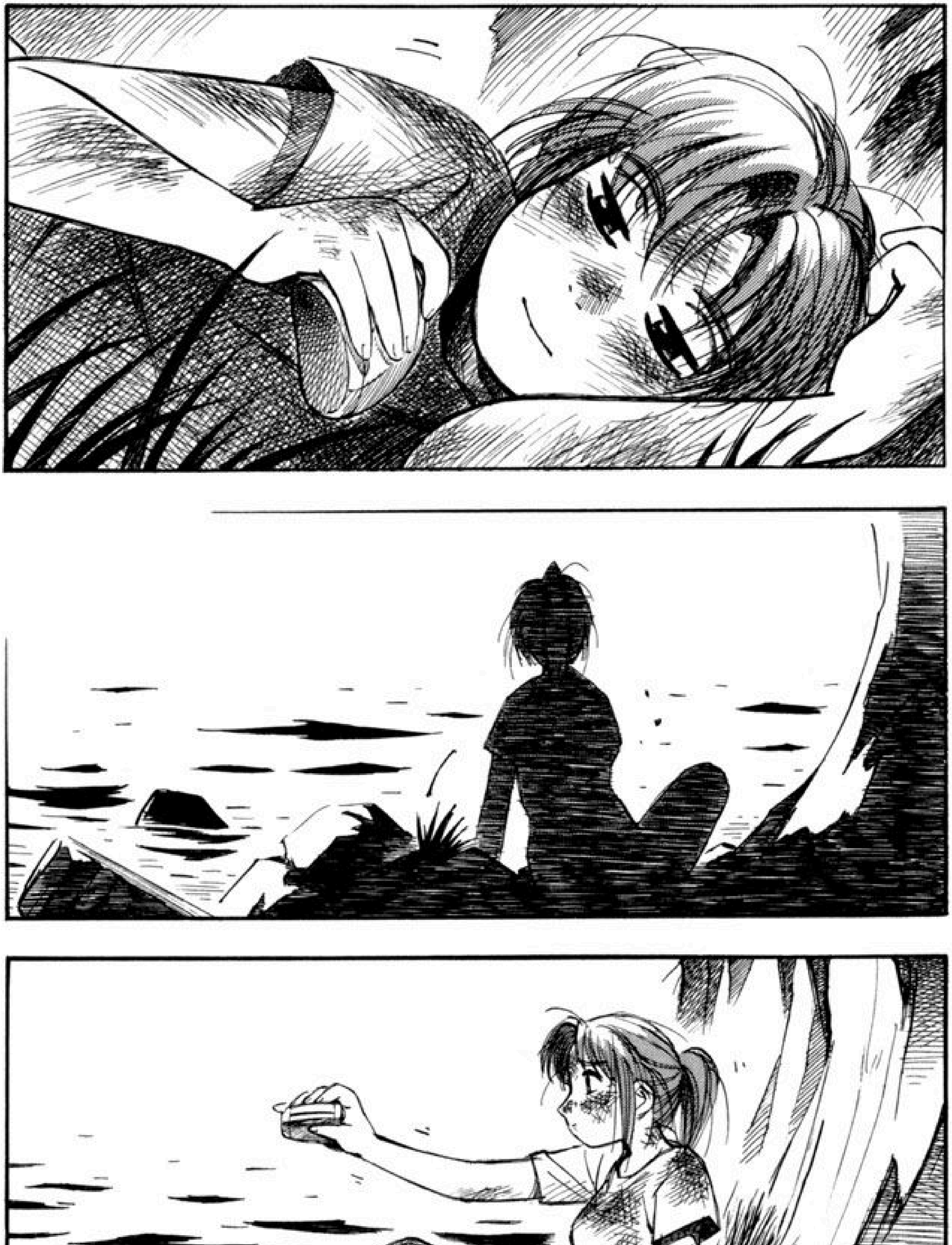


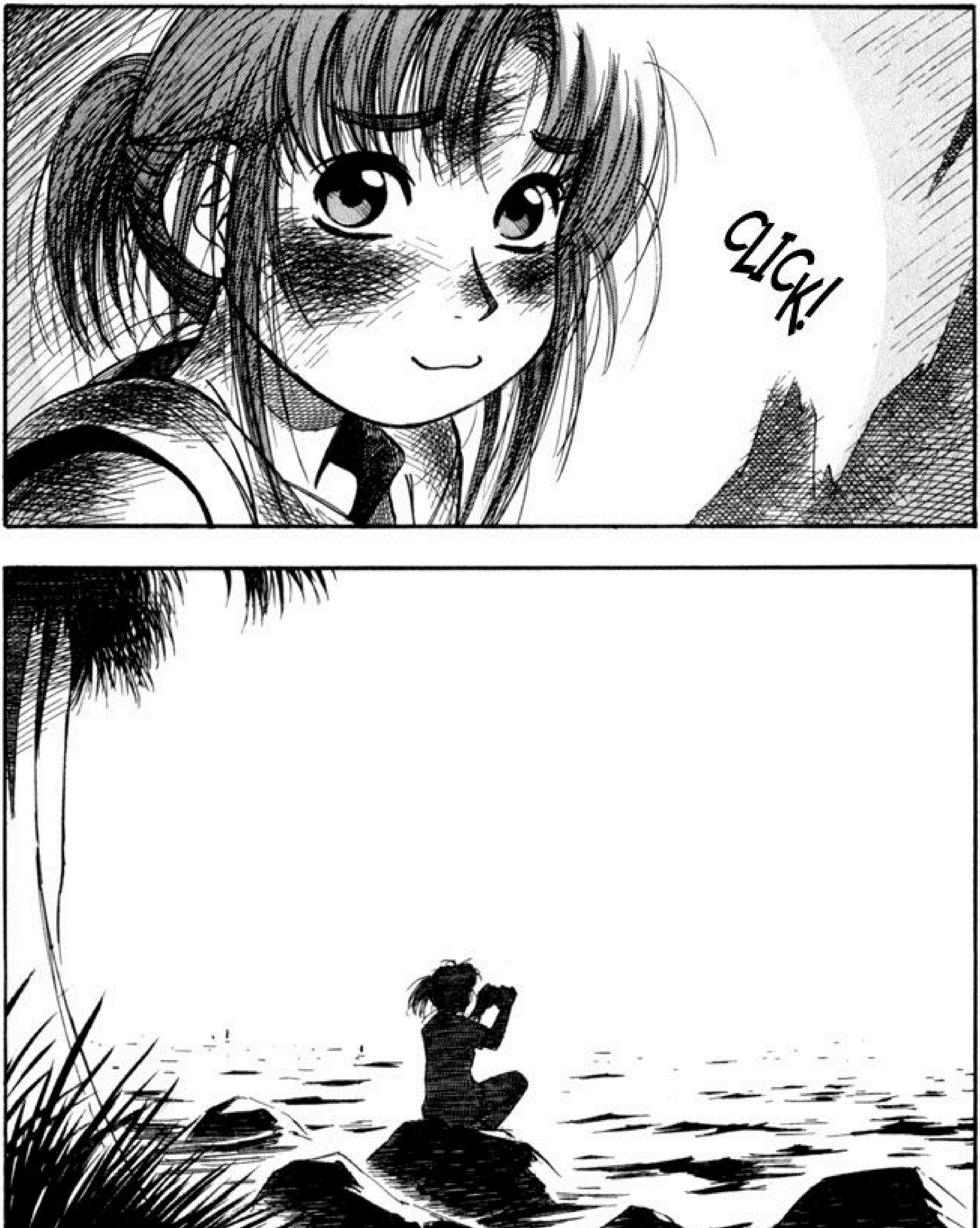




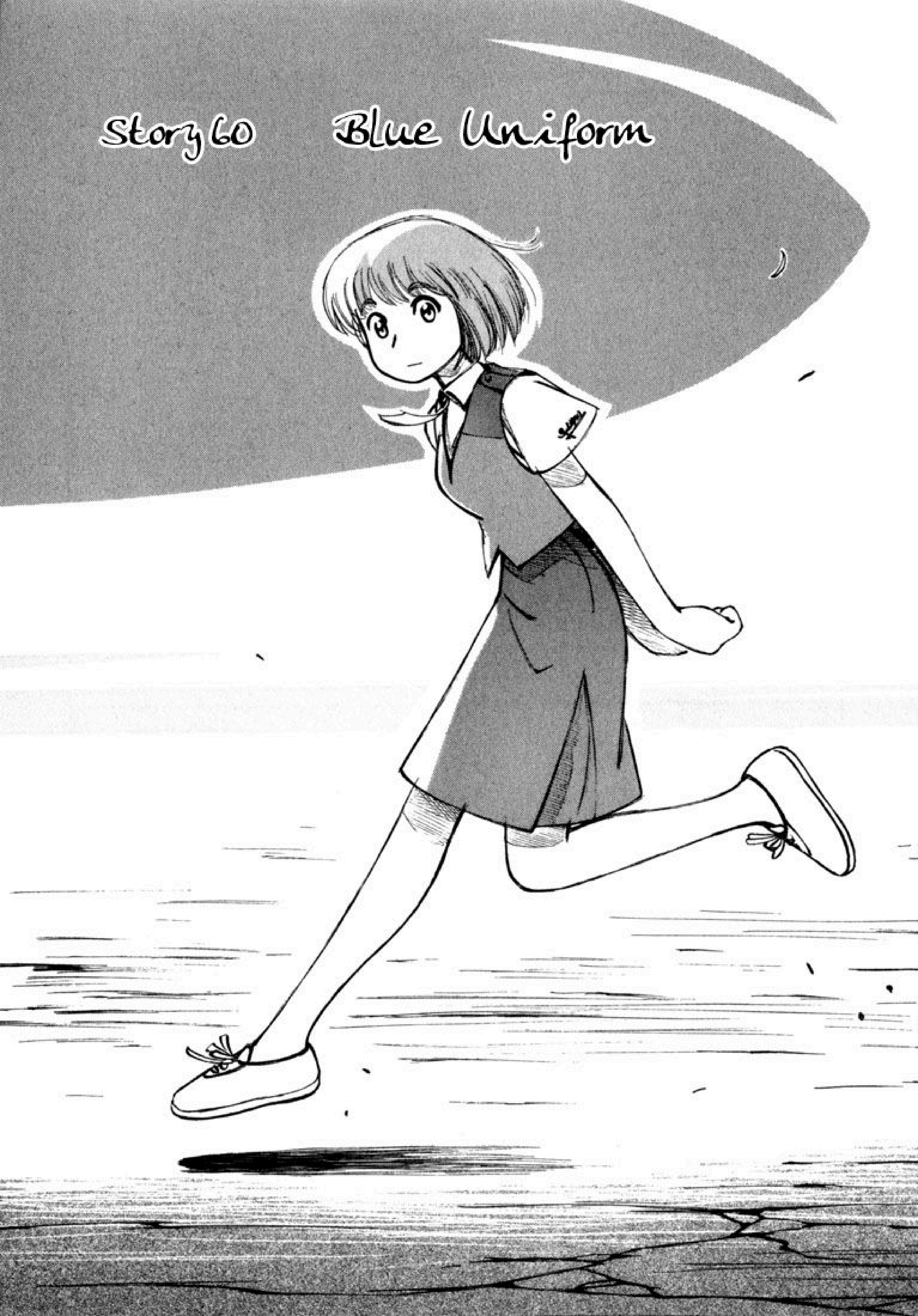




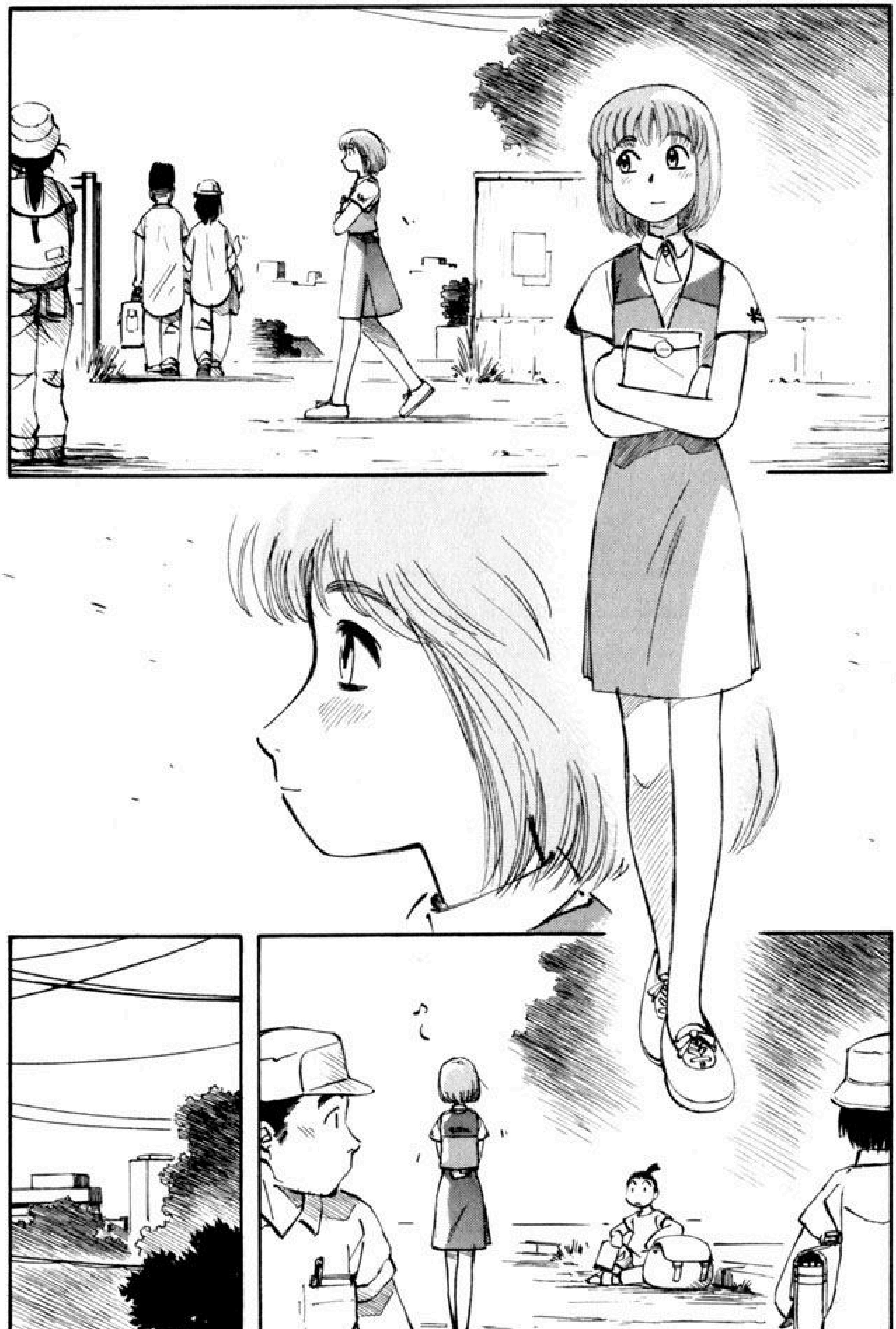




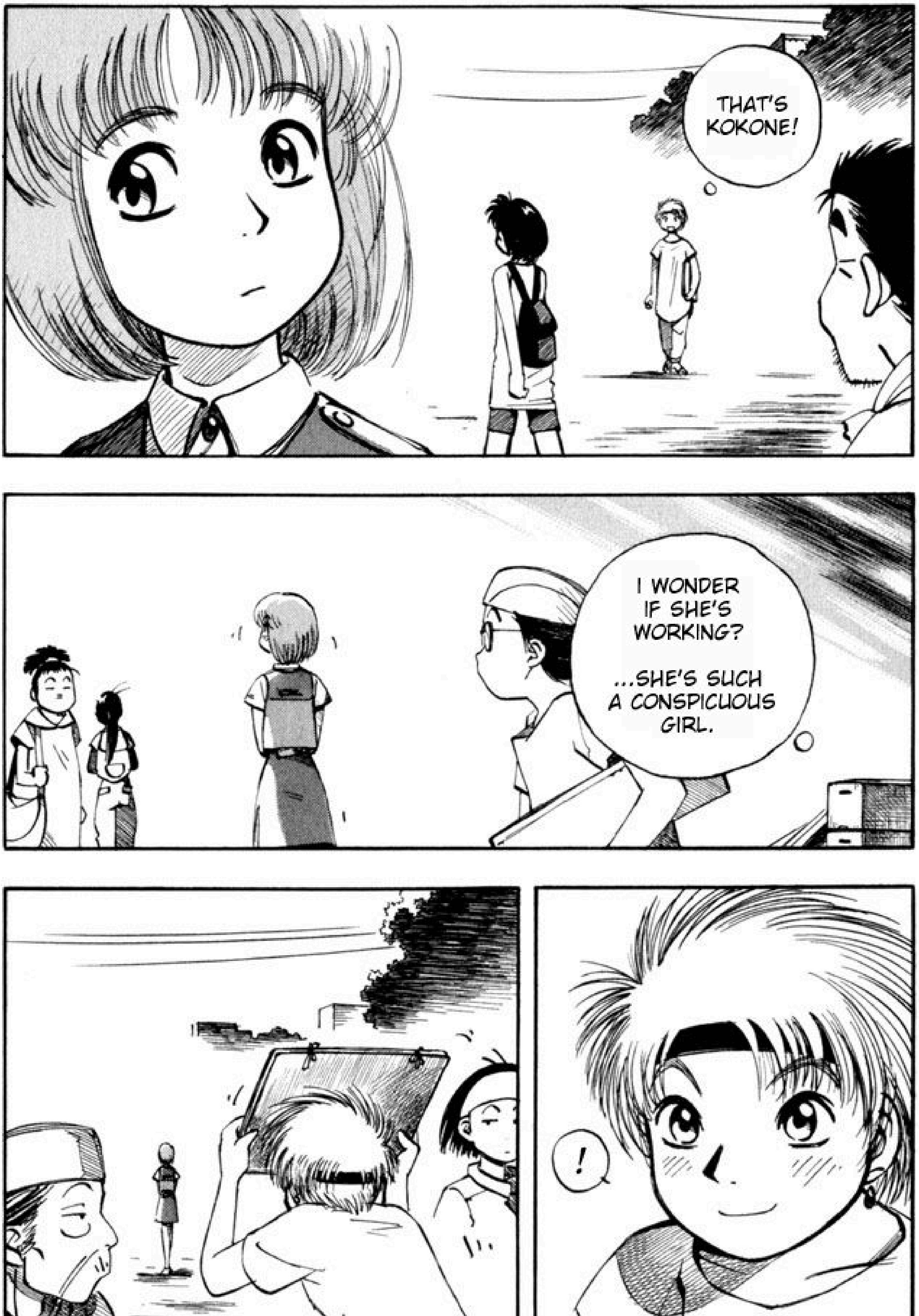

Story 59 - End


Story 60 Blue Uniform


HUH?
AREN'T YOU GOING HOME?
NO.
I STILL HAVE ONE LAST DELIVERY LEFT NEAR HERE.
REALLY? SORRY TO LEAVE YOU,
BUT I'M HEADING OUT.
THAT'S OKAY.
TAKE CARE!
SEE YOU.




HEY!

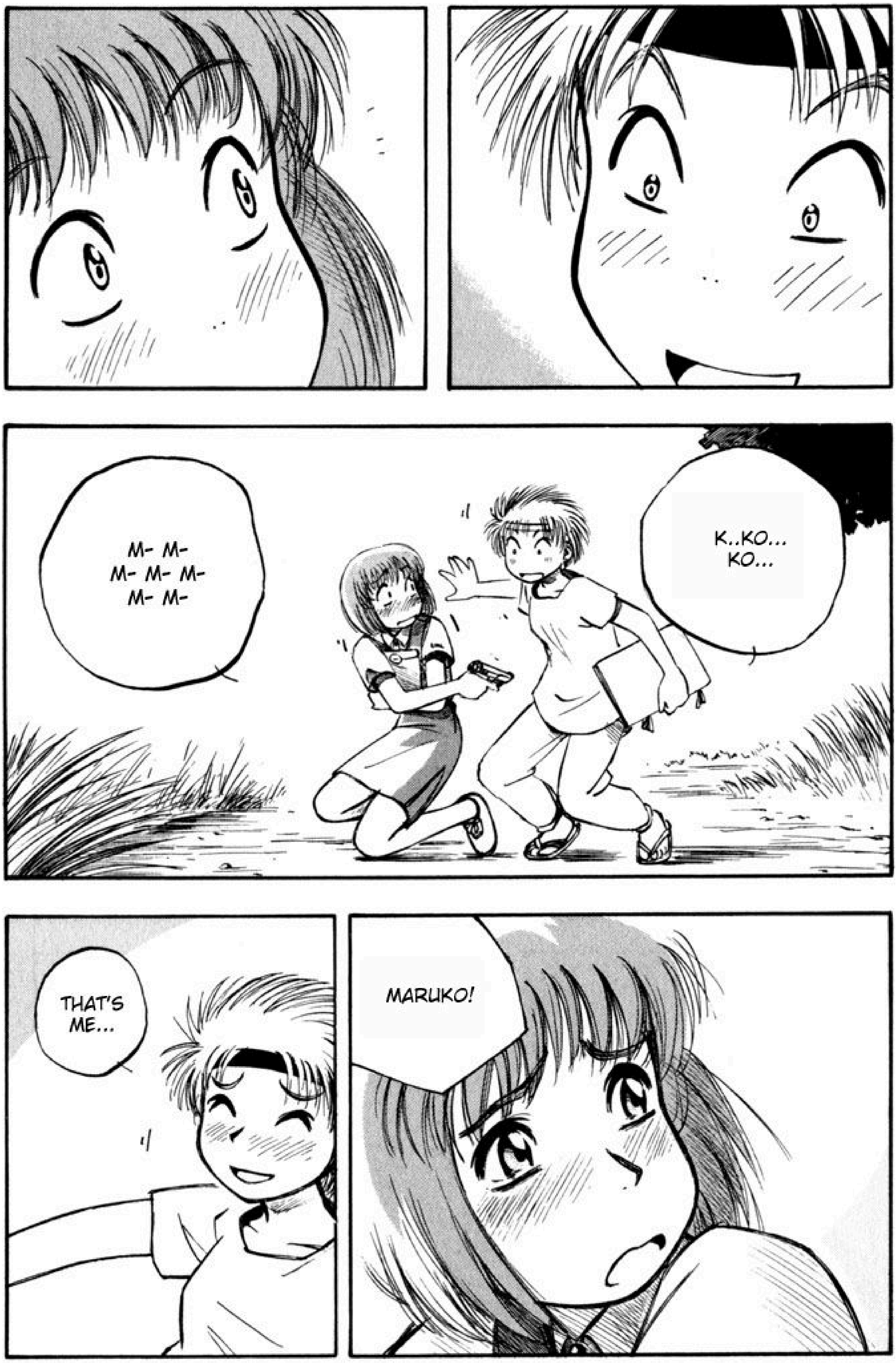

THAT'S KOKONE!
I WONDER IF SHE'S WORKING?
...SHE'S SUCH A CONSPICUOUS GIRL.
!

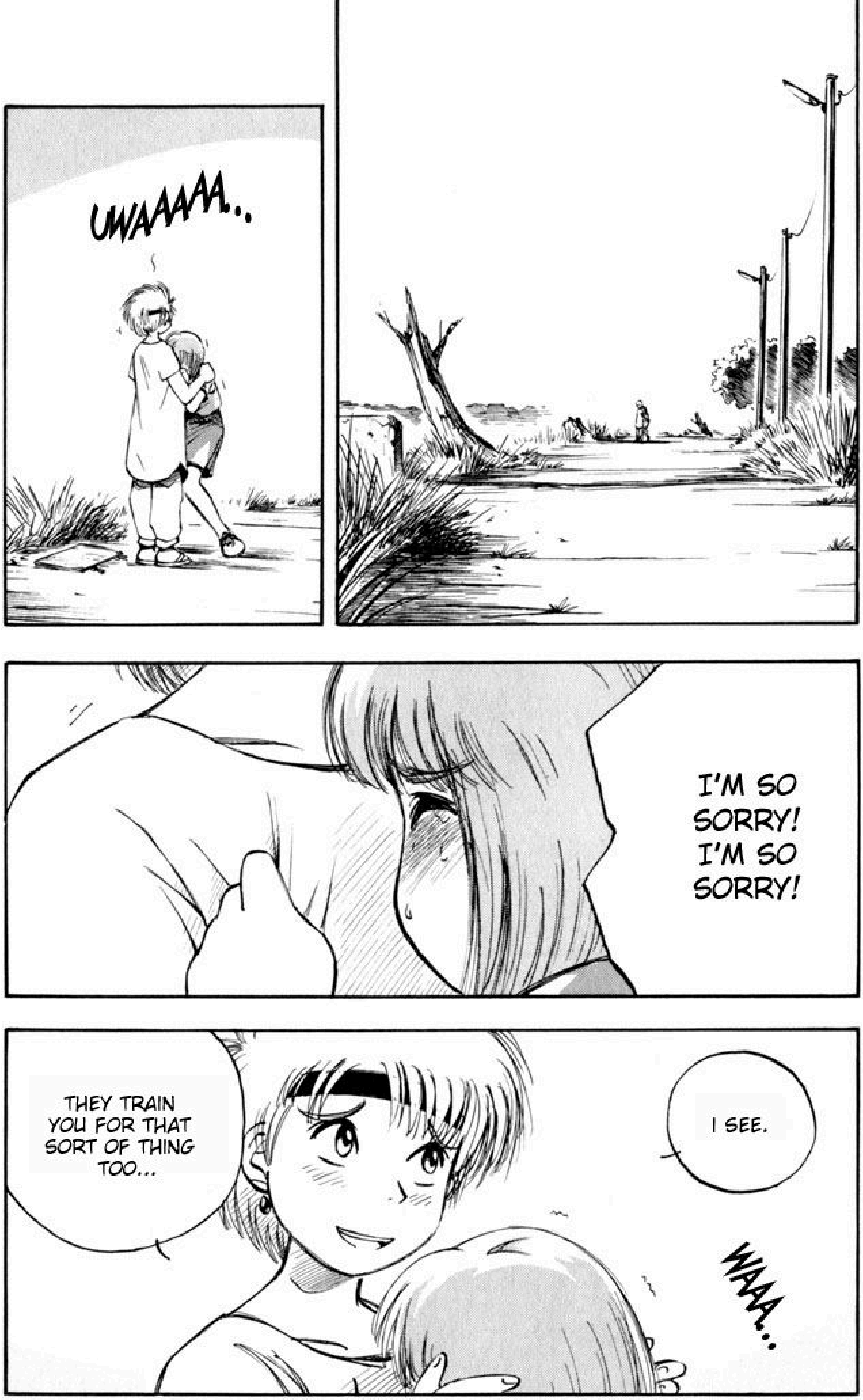

SHE STANDS OUT WITH HER BROWN HAIR TOUCHED WITH PURPLE, AND HER BLUE UNIFORM. THE SIMPLE COLORS SHINE AMIDST THE SURROUNDING STREET.
BUT MORE THAN ANYTHING...
HER SKIN IS BEAUTIFUL. EVEN THOUGH I'M A ROBOT LIKE HER, I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK SO.
WHY? HER DIET?
JUST MY IMAG-INATION?




SFX: <BOO!!>




K..KO... KO...
M- M- M- M- M- M- M-
MARUKO!
THAT'S ME...


UWAAAAA...
I'M SO SORRY! I'M SO SORRY!
I SEE.
THEY TRAIN YOU FOR THAT SORT OF THING TOO...
WAAA...

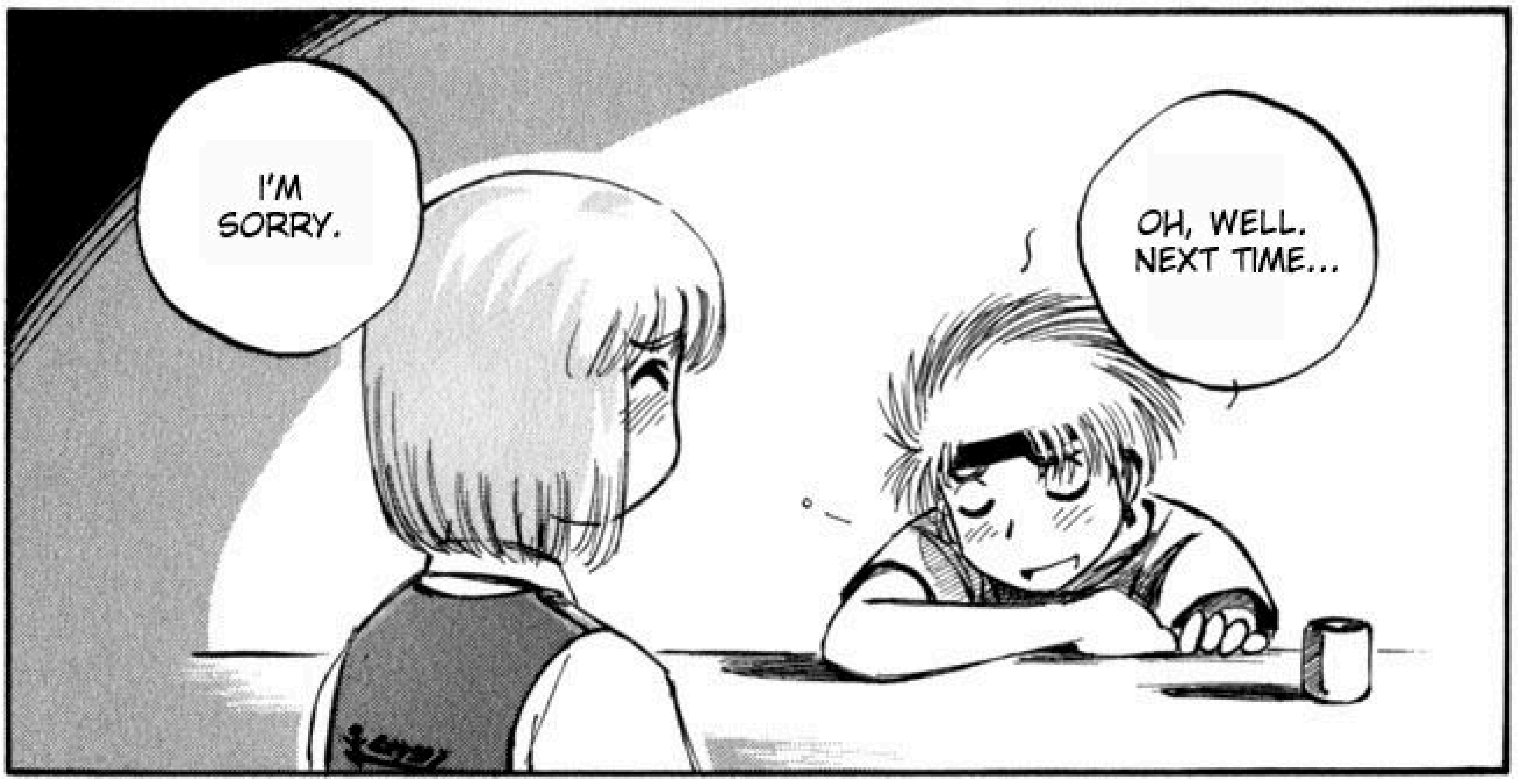

...IN A SITUATION LIKE THAT, SUDDENLY SUPRISED FROM BEHIND...
YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG.
...COME ON, DON'T CRY.
ANYWAY, IF ANYONE'S AT FAULT, IT'S ME.
COME ON.
LET'S GET YOUR PACKAGE DELIVERED.
...OKAY.
AFTERWARD, I'LL TREAT YOU TO SOMETHING.

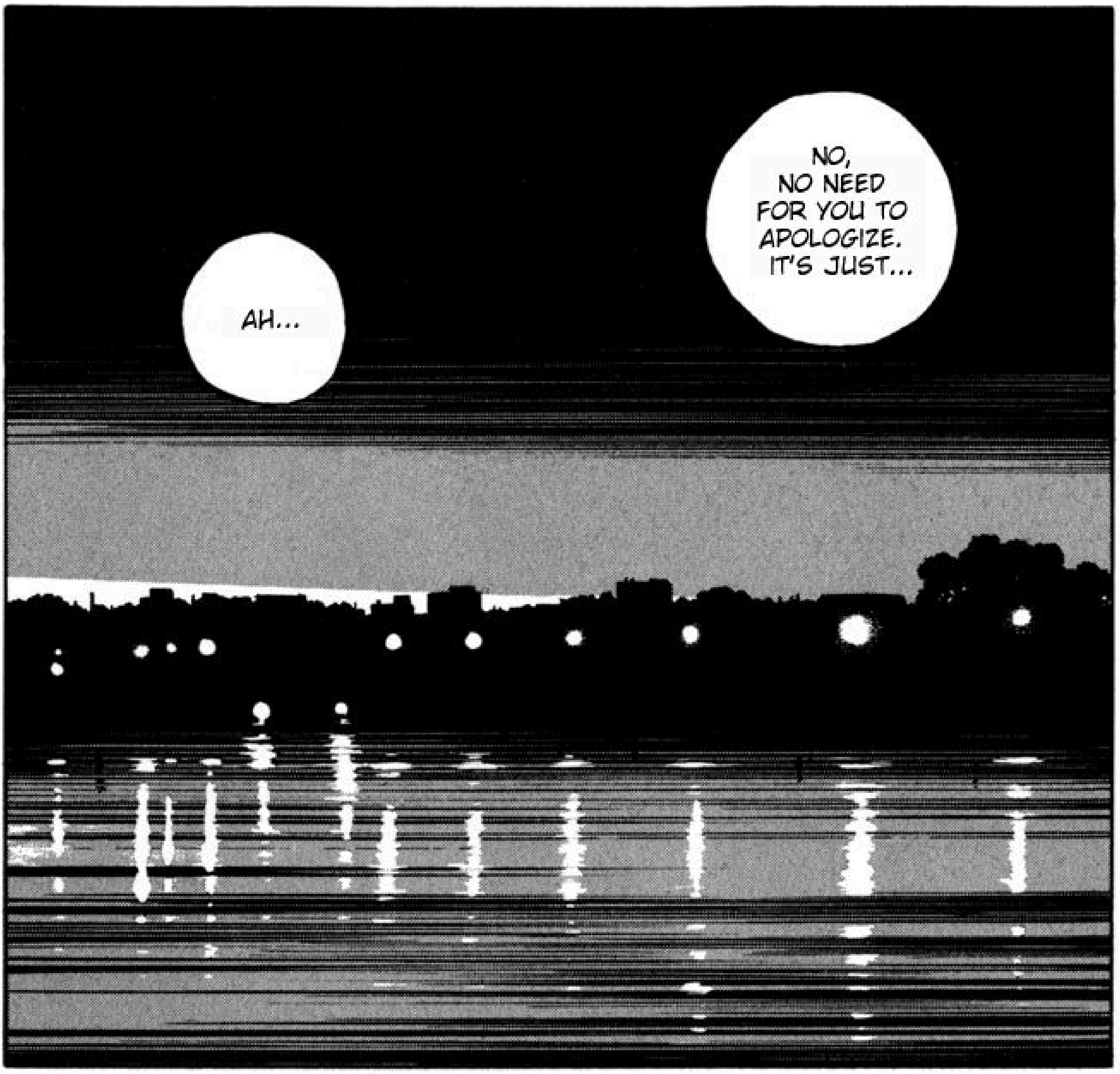

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たま川


YOU'VE FINALLY CALMED DOWN.
I GUESS...
I'M REALLY SORRY.
I TOLD YOU, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

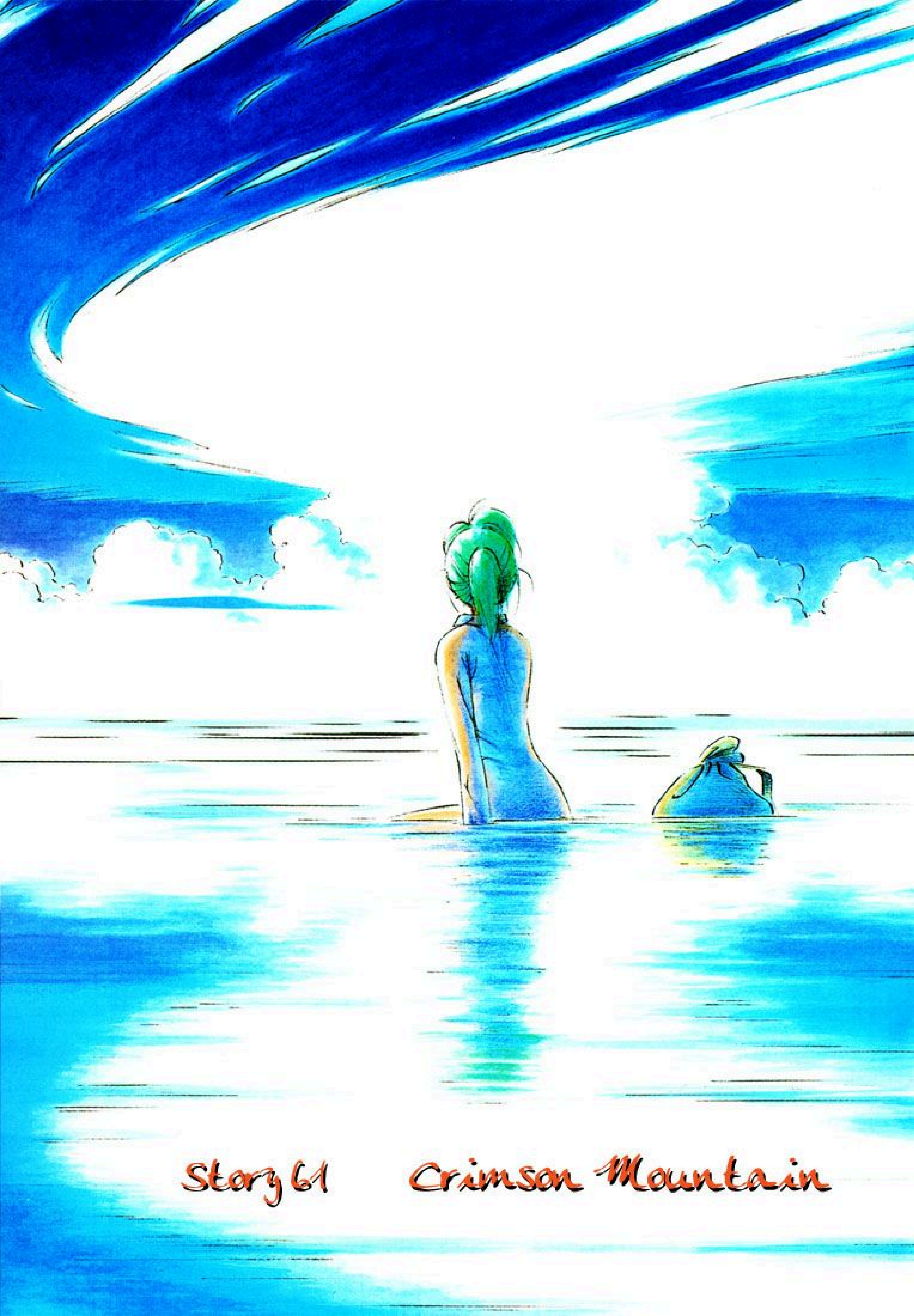

YOU REALLY GAVE ME A SURPRISE, THOUGH!
ALTHOUGH IT'S NOT LIKE YOU ACTUALLY HAVE ANY BULLETS IN THAT THING.
NO... I HAD THREE...
AH... I SEE.
GULP
WELL, THEY'RE JUST 9MM ELECTROSHOCK BULLETS, BUT...
OOH!
I KNOW THOSE. THEY'RE THE ONES THAT GO "ZAP." RIGHT?
PHEW
YES... THEY'RE NO JOKE, THOUGH.
I'M TOLD THEY'D LEAVE A SCAR...
HMMM...
GULP!

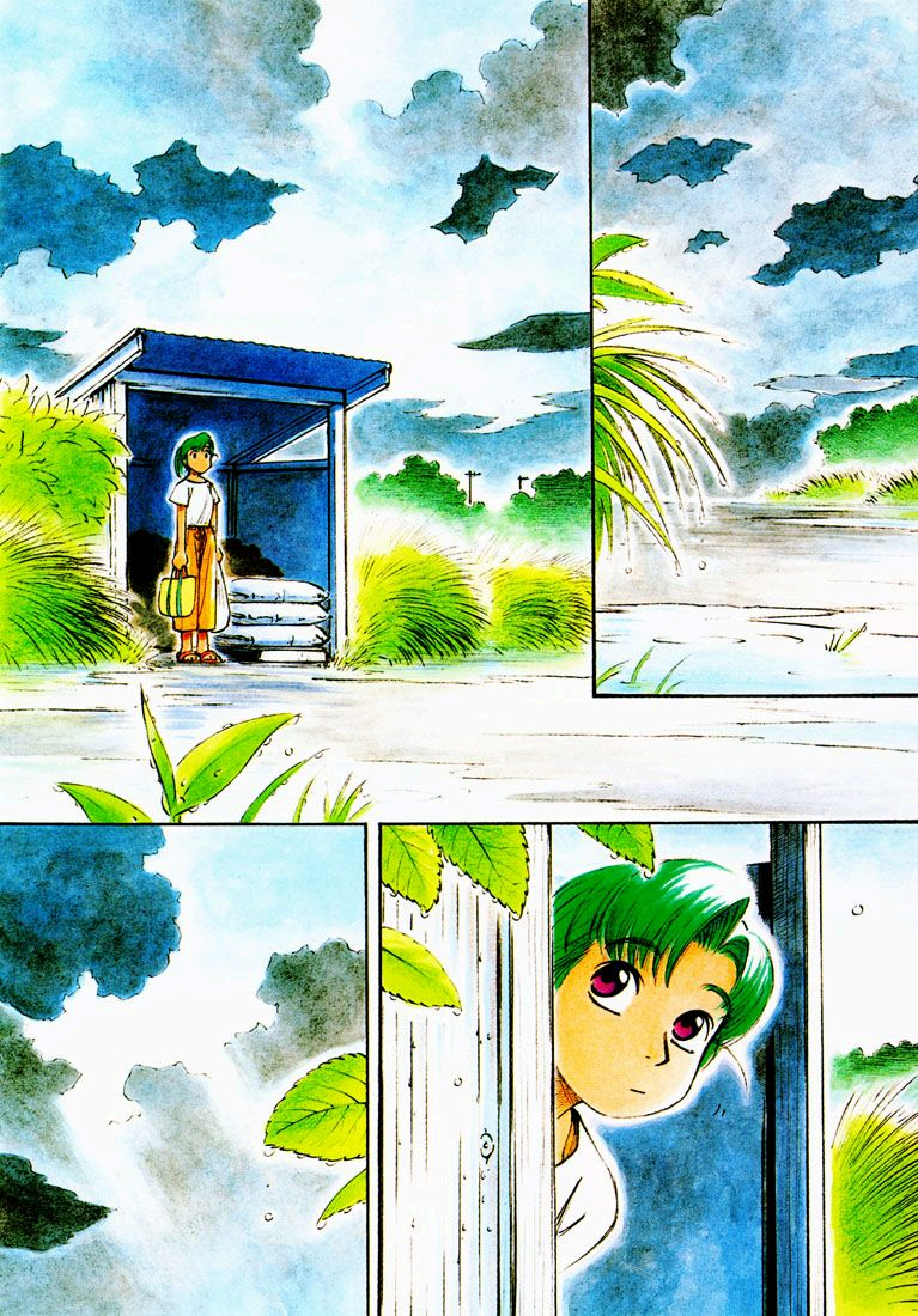

OH, THAT'S RIGHT!
KOKONE, YOU'RE TAKING A SUMMER VACATION, RIGHT?
HOW'D YOU LIKE TO GO SWIMMING IN CHIBA?
UH...
?
UM... ER... I- I...
THIS SUMMER... UM... I'M PROBABLY GOING TO BE GOING SOUTH, SO...
OH, IS THAT SO?
SOUTH, HUH?
THAT'S TOO BAD.


I'M SORRY.
OH, WELL. NEXT TIME...


NO, NO NEED FOR YOU TO APOLOGIZE. IT'S JUST...
AH...

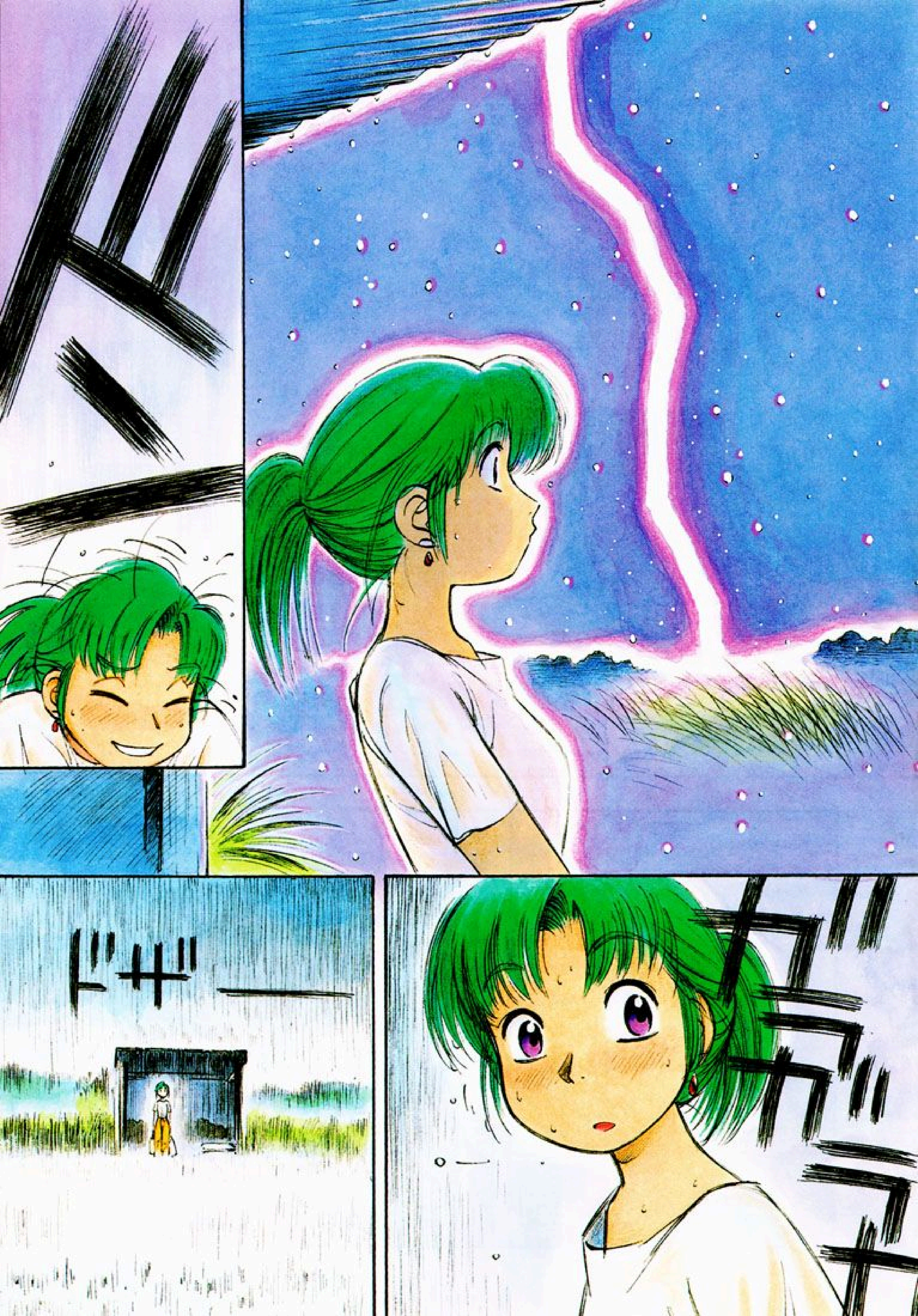
Story 60 - End


Story 61 Crimson Mountain

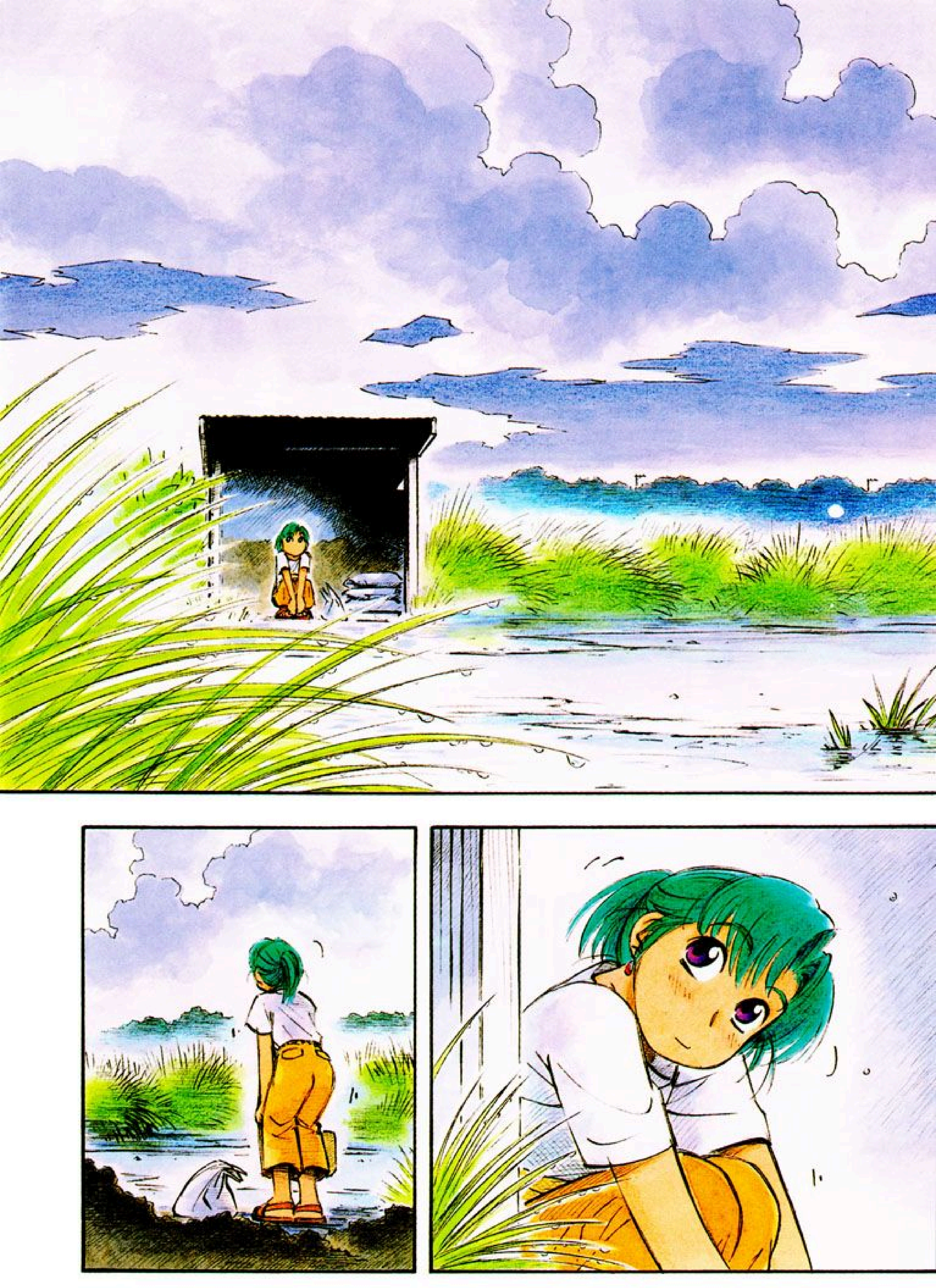


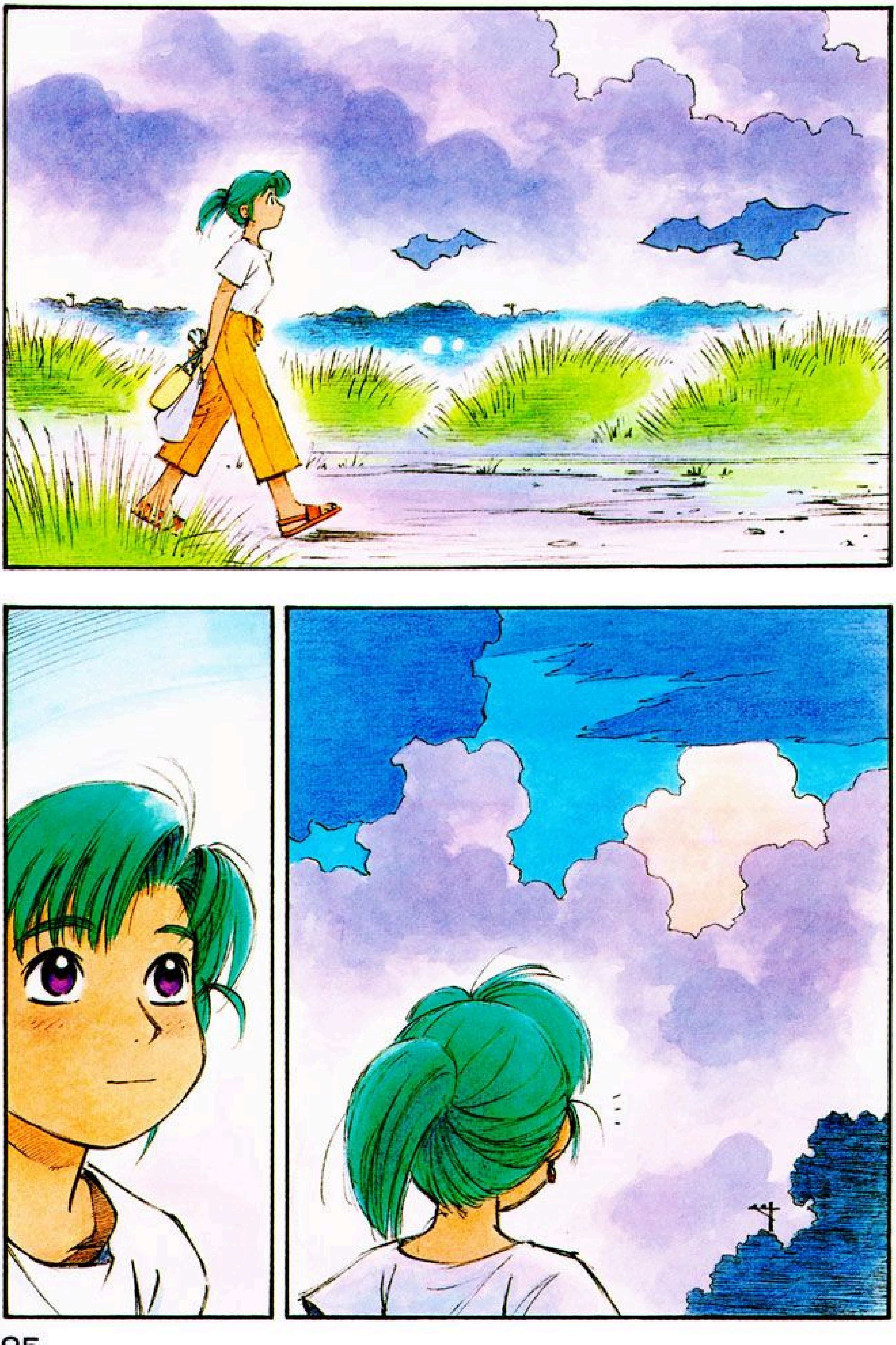


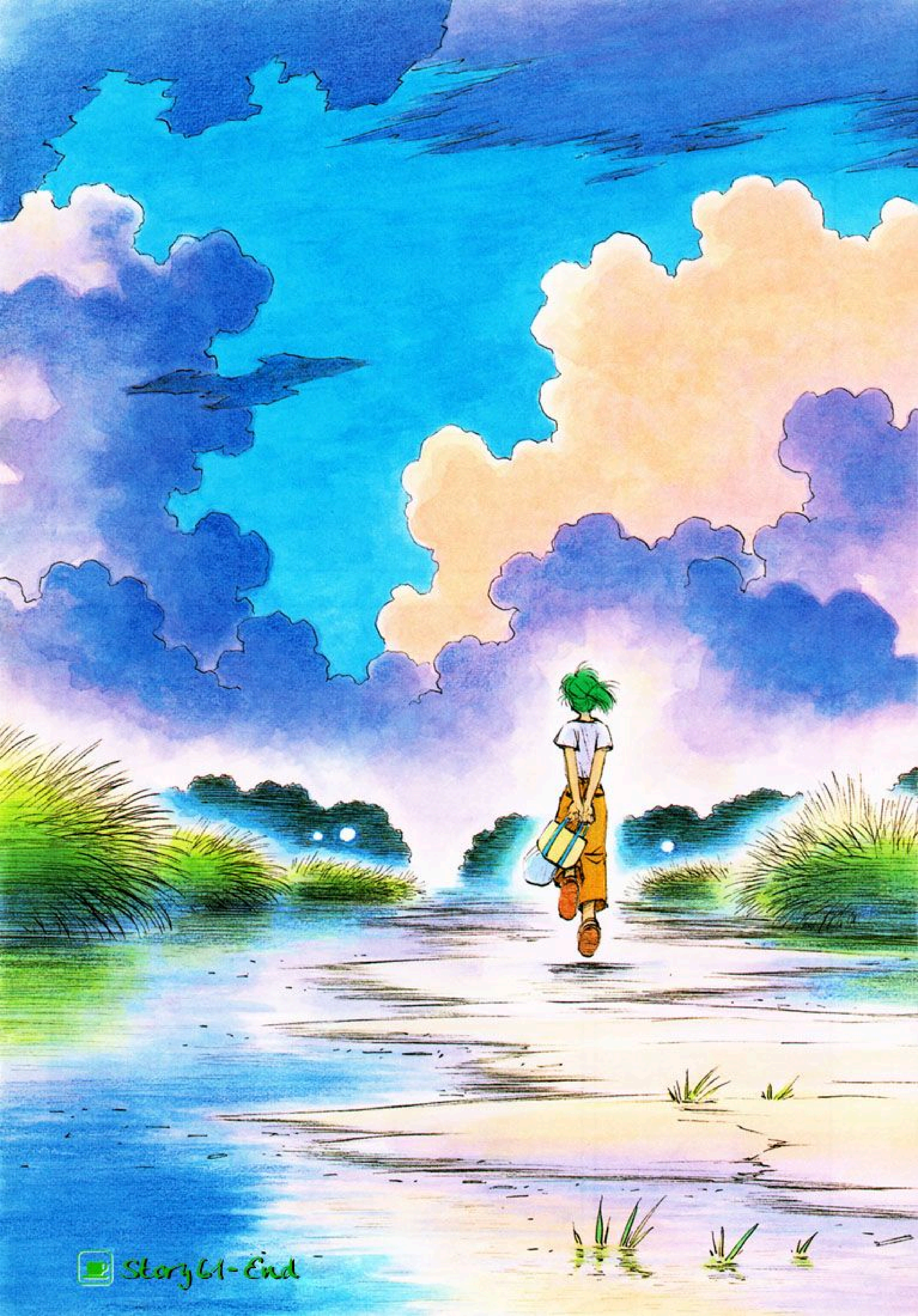

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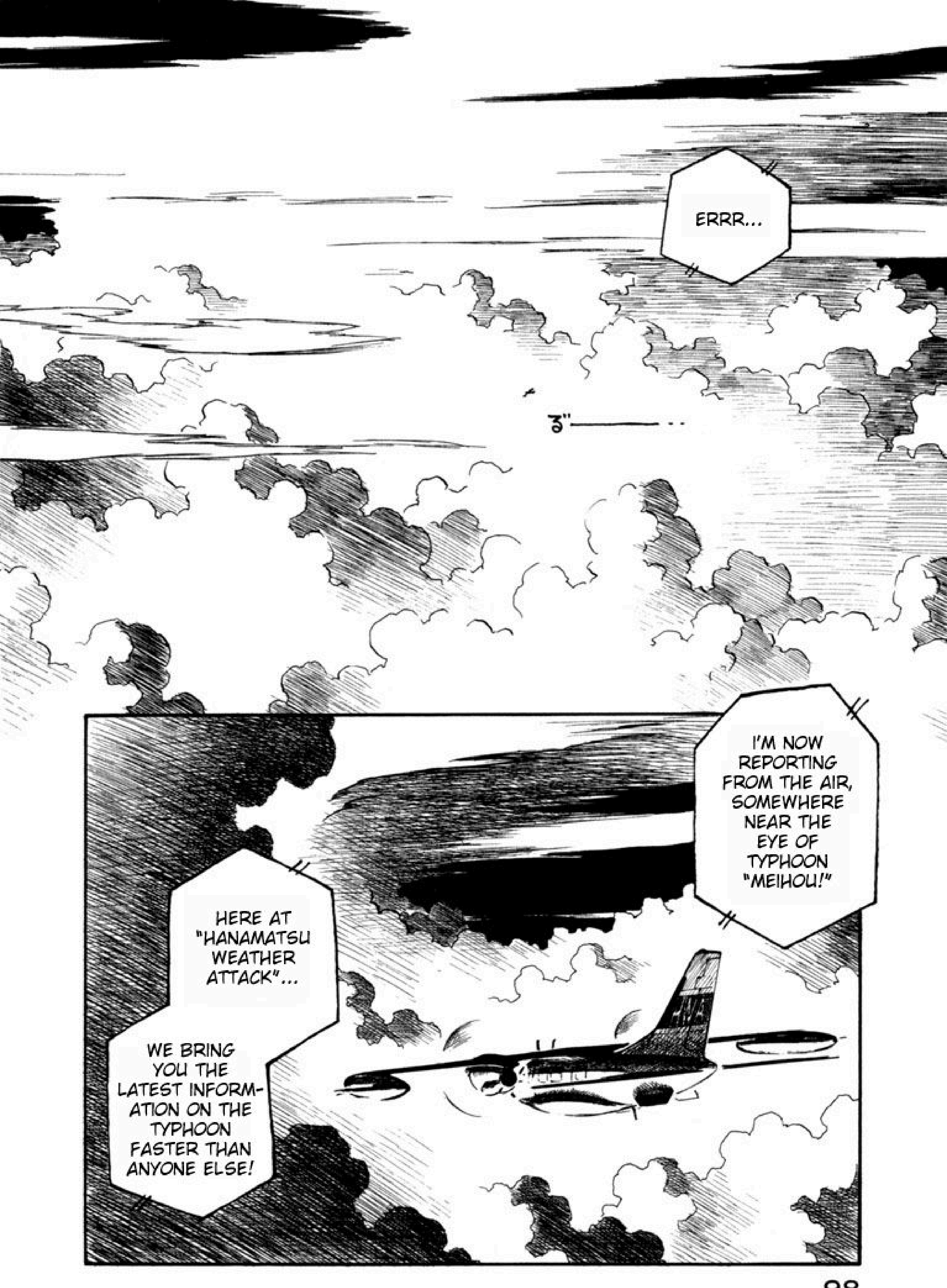
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Story 61 - End


Story 62 Typhoon


ERRR...
る"——— . .
I'M NOW REPORTING FROM THE AIR, SOMEWHERE NEAR THE EYE OF TYPHOON "MEIHOU!"
HERE AT "HANAMATSU WEATHER ATTACK"...
WE BRING YOU THE LATEST INFORMATION ON THE TYPHOON FASTER THAN ANYONE ELSE!

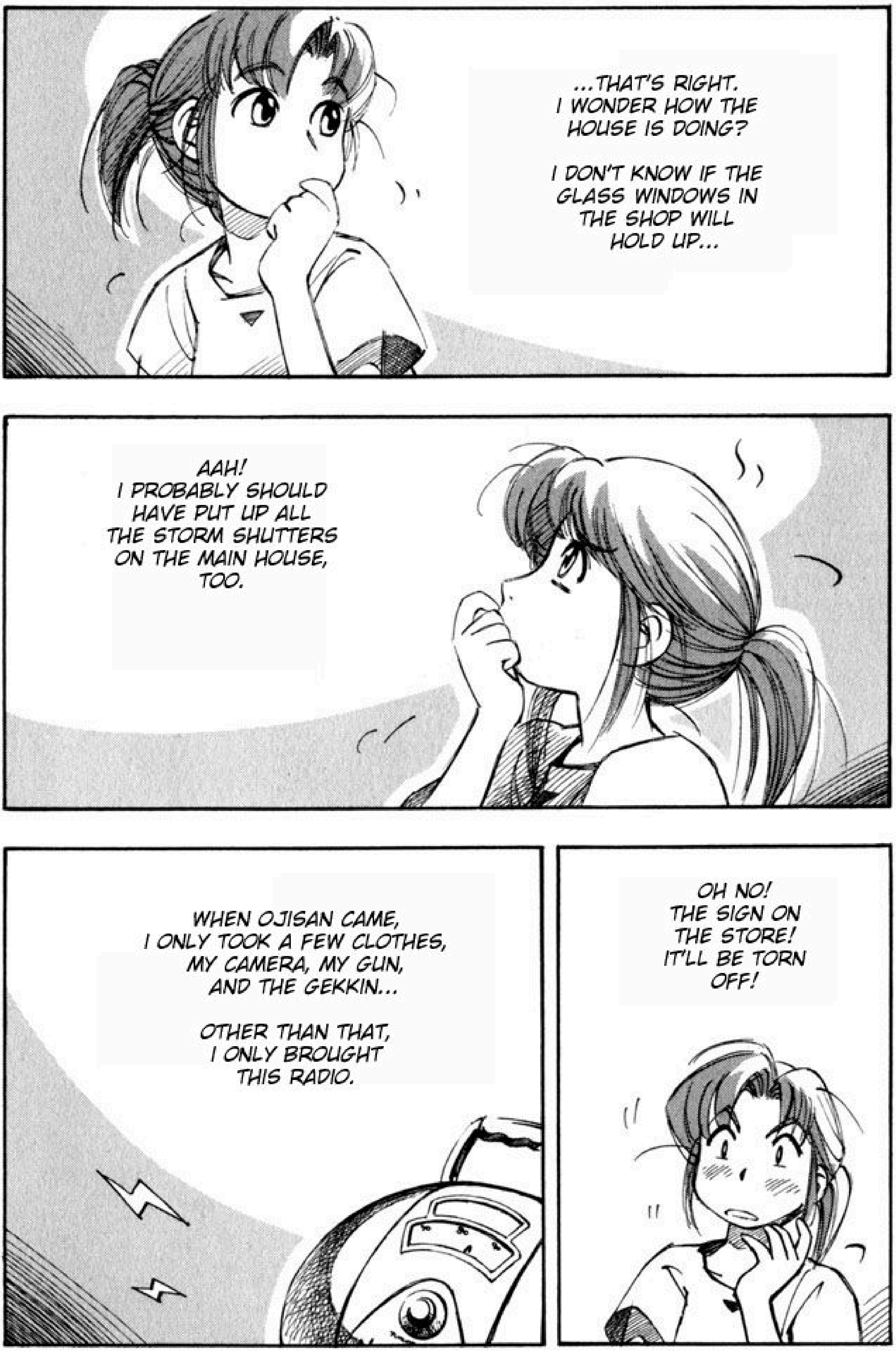

ERRR...
WE HAVE AN UPDATE FROM OUR INSTRUMENTS ON THE GROUND.
THE AIR PRESSURE IN THE EYE IS NOW 905 HPA. TOP WIND SPEEDS SURROUNDING THE EYE ARE...


THE TYPHOON WAS COMING.
YESTERDAY, AS USUAL, I SET THE HOUSE IN ORDER.
I PUT UP THE STORM SHUTTERS.
AS I BUSIED MYSELF WITH PREPARATIONS, EVENING APPROACHED.
THAT EVENING, OJISAN CAME.
HE SAID, "I'VE GOT A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS ONE. GO GET ANYTHING IMPORTANT AND COME SPEND THE NIGHT AT THE STATION."
SO THAT'S WHAT I DID.


OJISAN SAID, "I HAVE SOME THINGS TO TAKE CARE OF AT HOME. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK." AND LEFT.
SOON AFTER, A TREMENDOUS STORM CAME UP.
THE SOUND OF THE WIND, LIKE AN EARTHQUAKE.
THE SOUND OF THE RAIN, LIKE GRAVEL PELTING THE BUILDING, COMES IN WAVES.


MORNING ...
MEIHOU IS SLOWLY PASSING OVER SAGAMI NADA...


........
IT LOOKS LIKE THE TYPHOON IS STILL HANGING AROUND THIS AREA.
LISTENING TO THE ENDLESS SOUND OF THE WIND, EVEN THOUGH THIS IS A CONCRETE-REINFORCED BUILDING, I BEGIN TO FEEL A BIT UNEASY.
...I WONDER IF OJISAN IS ALL RIGHT?
I THINK HE SHOULD BE FINE... HE KNOWS A LOT ABOUT TYPHOONS.


...THAT'S RIGHT. I WONDER HOW THE HOUSE IS DOING?
I DON'T KNOW IF THE GLASS WINDOWS IN THE SHOP WILL HOLD UP...
AAH! I PROBABLY SHOULD HAVE PUT UP ALL THE STORM SHUTTERS ON THE MAIN HOUSE, TOO.
OH NO! THE SIGN ON THE STORE! IT'LL BE TORN OFF!
WHEN OJISAN CAME, I ONLY TOOK A FEW CLOTHES, MY CAMERA, MY GUN, AND THE GEKKIN...
OTHER THAN THAT, I ONLY BROUGHT THIS RADIO.



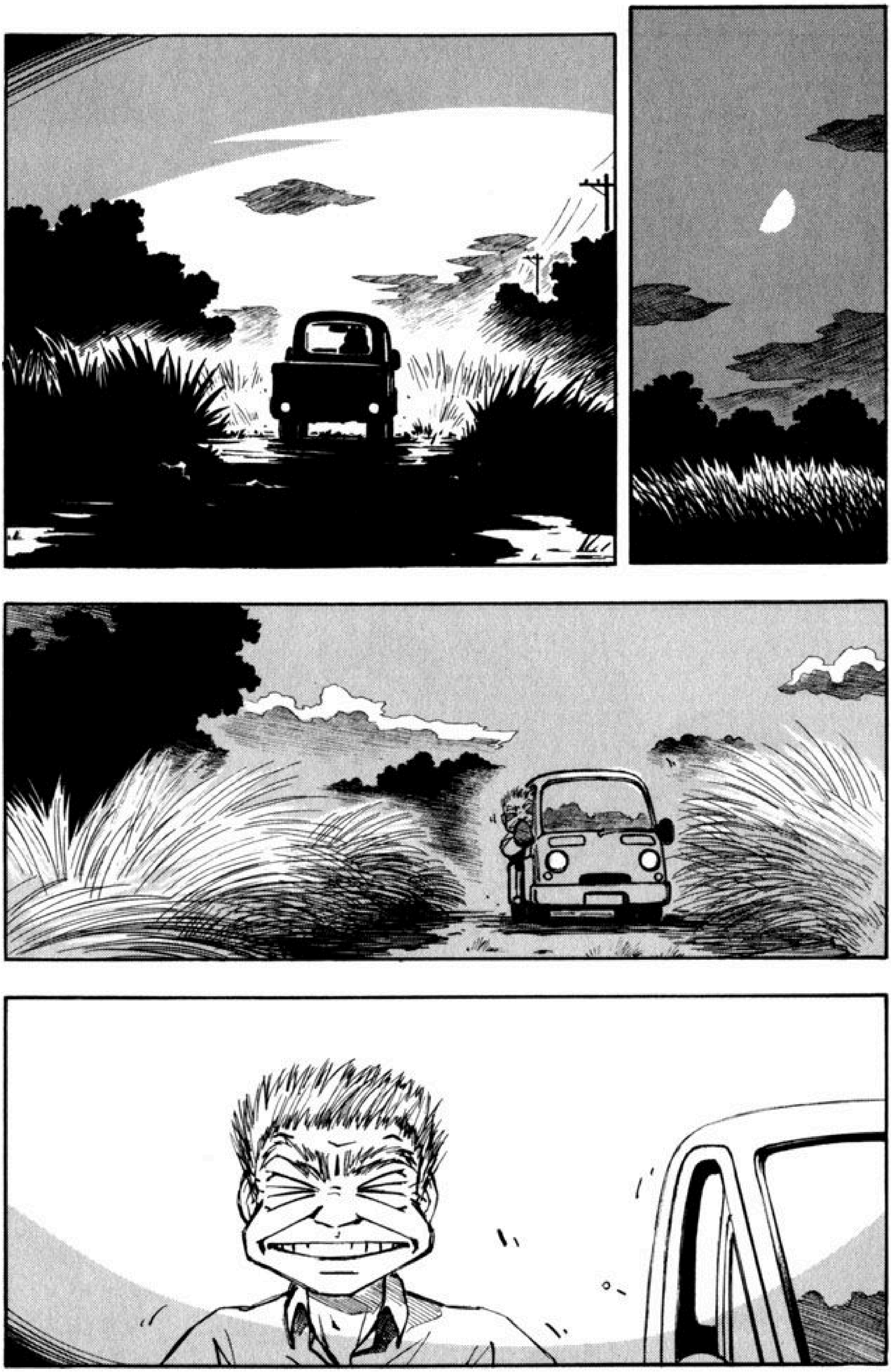
OJISAN... HE MUST HAVE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE SAFER TO TAKE REFUGE HERE.
THIS PLACE IS BEING HIT HARD BY THE TYPHOON, BUT IT MUST BE EVER WORSE CLOSER TO THE SEA.
AHHH... I'M DEFINITELY WORRIED NOW.
CAN'T THIS END SOON?
イラ
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イラ
イラ
イラ
ドドドド
ZZZ
カタ
カタ
カタ






TYPHOON "MEIHOU," WHICH STRUCK SHOUNAKO, IS NOW PASSING OVER THE PLAINS...
KASHIMANADA RECEIVED THE BRUNT OF THE WINDS, WHILE THE COUNTRY OF IBARAKI WAS LARGELY MISSED.
ERR... AS OUR TEAM PREDICTED FROM THE START...

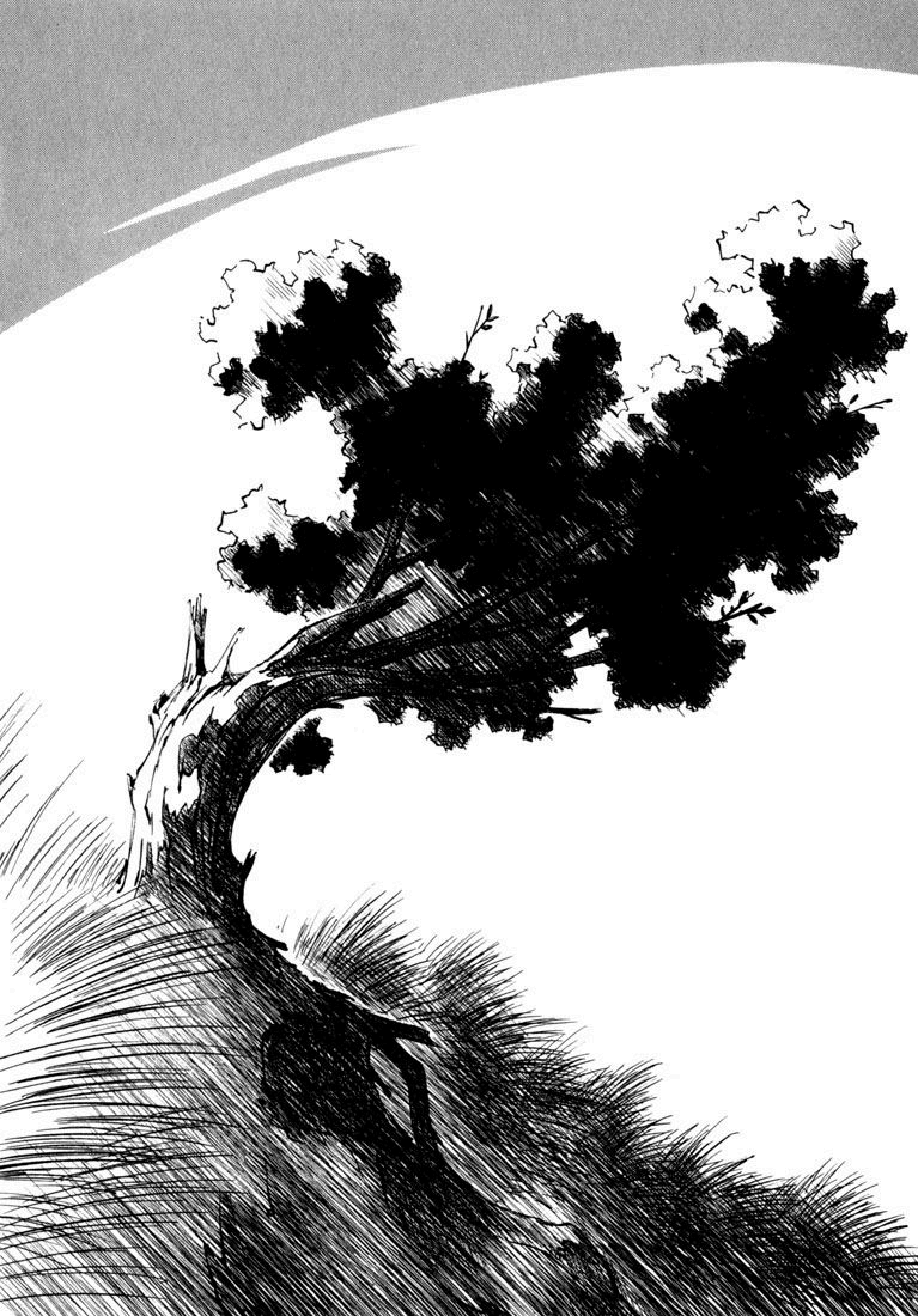

PHEW





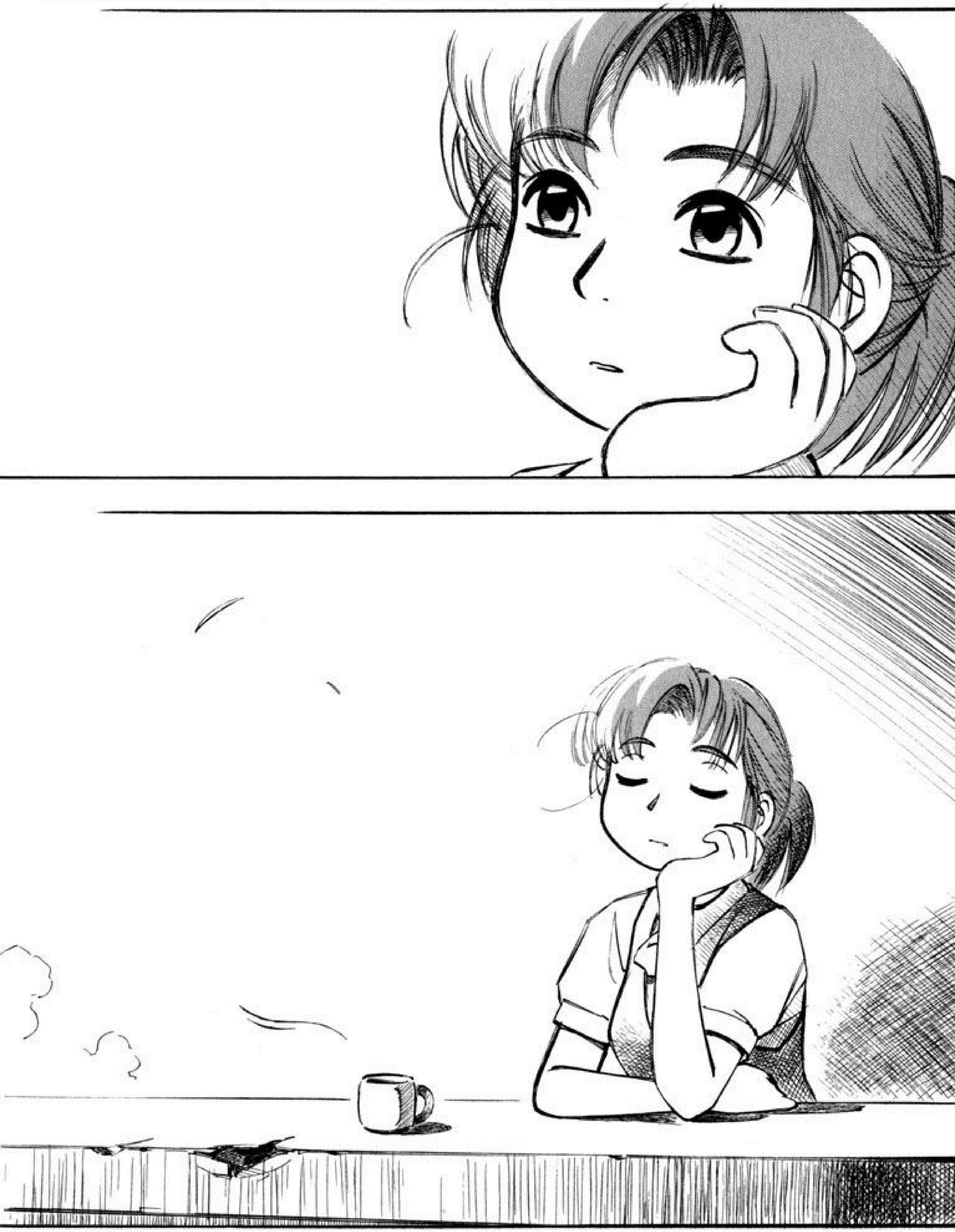

Story 62 - End

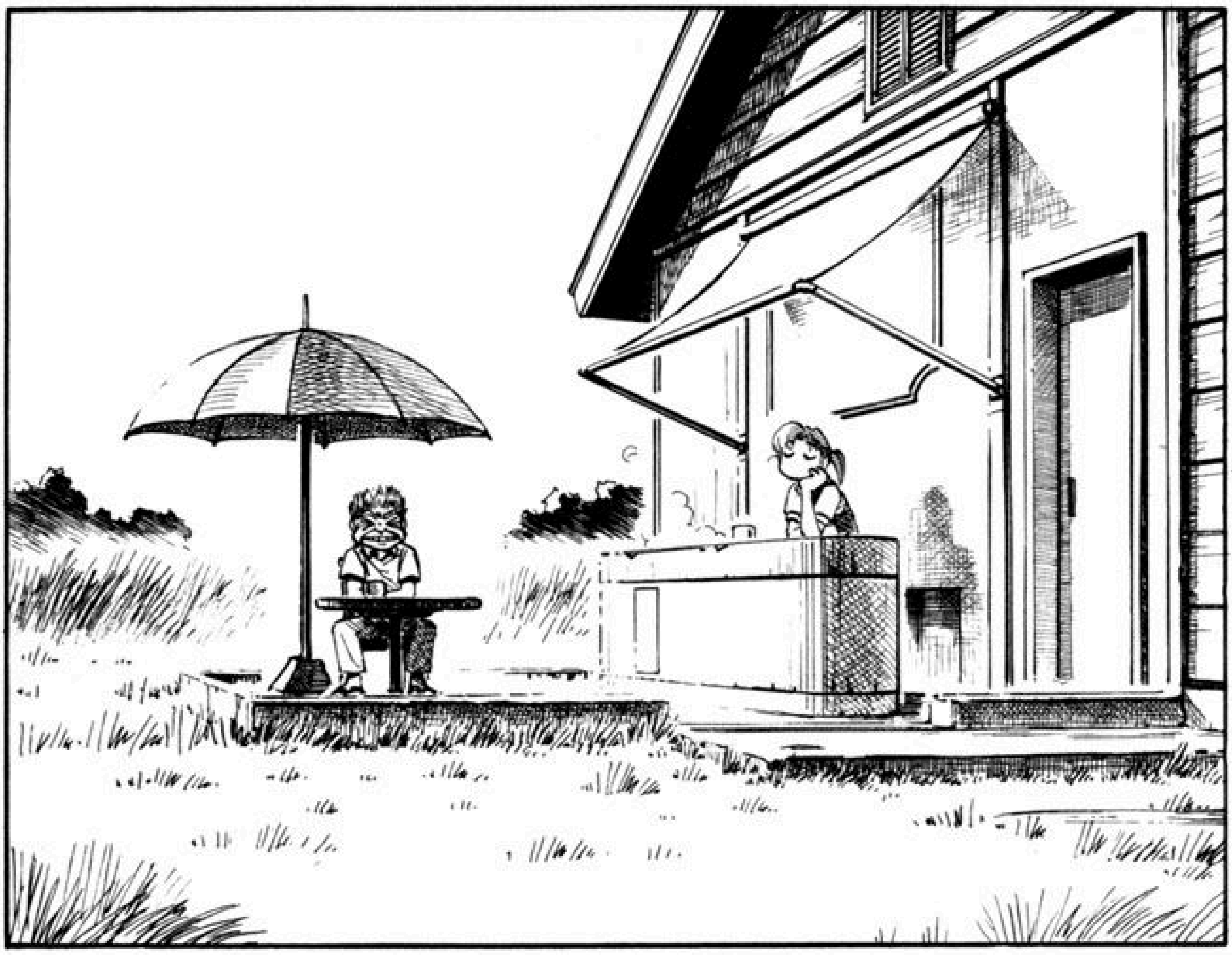

Story 63
My Place

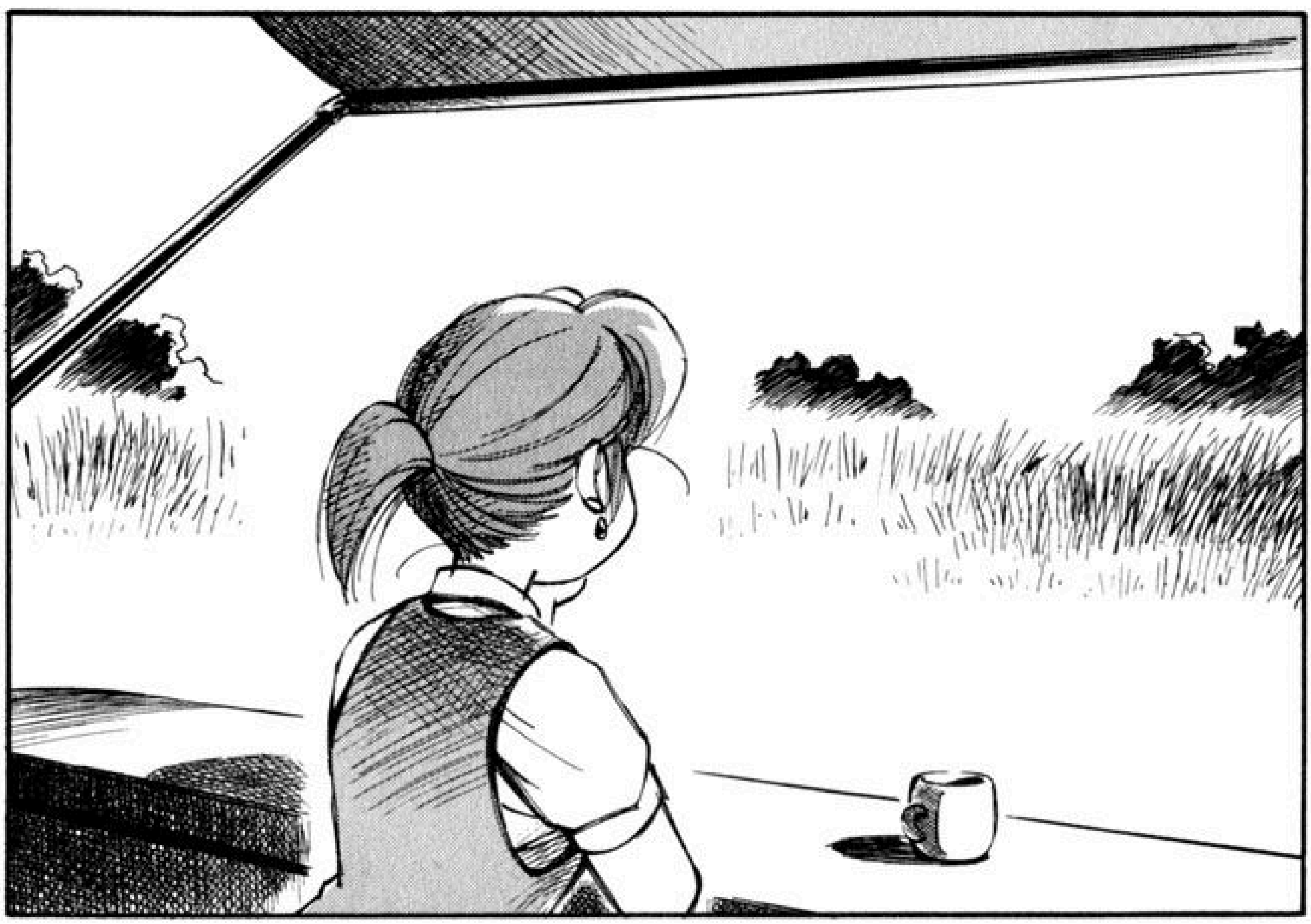





OPEN
café
Alpha









IT FEELS LIKE I'M RUNNING A STORE AT YOUR GAS STATION.
YEAH, IT DOES KINDA LOOK LIKE IT.
BUT YA KNOW...
I NEVER IMAGINED
THE WHOLE STORE WOULD BLOW AWAY LIKE THAT.
YES.
BUT SOMEHOW, I HAD A FEELING SOMETHING LIKE THIS WOULD HAPPEN...


THE SHOP... I'M CERTAIN IT DID IT'S BEST.
BUT IT WAS AL-READY FALLING APART.
YA TOOK IT REALLY WELL THAT DAY.
I WAS IMPRESSED.
I WAS IN A PANIC BEFORE YOU CAME.
FOR A MINUTE... I WAS...
I FELT LIKE I WAS ABOUT TO CRY.
......


THAT SO?
UM...
TAKAHIRO.
HOW HAS HE BEEN? ... SINCE THEN.


AH... IT LOOKS LIKE IT REALLY SHOOK HIM UP.
FER TAKA... THIS IS PROBABLY THE FIRST TIME
THAT HE'S LOST SOMETHING FAMILIAR TO HIM.
THAT'S RIGHT...


YA'VE REALLY CLEANED UP THE PLACE THIS PAST WEEK.
IT'S STILL JUST A QUICK FIX. THIS AWNING ISN'T MUCH.
WELL, YA CAN STILL RUN THE SHOP LIKE THIS FOR A WHILE. THE WEATHER'S GOOD.
YES...
BUT SOMEDAY, I'M GOING TO REBUILD IT THE WAY IT WAS.


I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER SEEN YOU THAT SERIOUS BEFORE.
EH?
HMMMMM...
...IT'S GOIN' TO TAKE A LOT TO FIND MATERIALS, AND A LOT OF WORK BESIDES.
WON'T BE CHEAP.
YES.


I...
I THINK I MAY BE GOING AWAY FOR A WHILE.
I WAS THINKING OF WANDERING AROUND AWAY FROM HERE.
LOOKIN' FOR A JOB?
UMM... I GUESS SO...

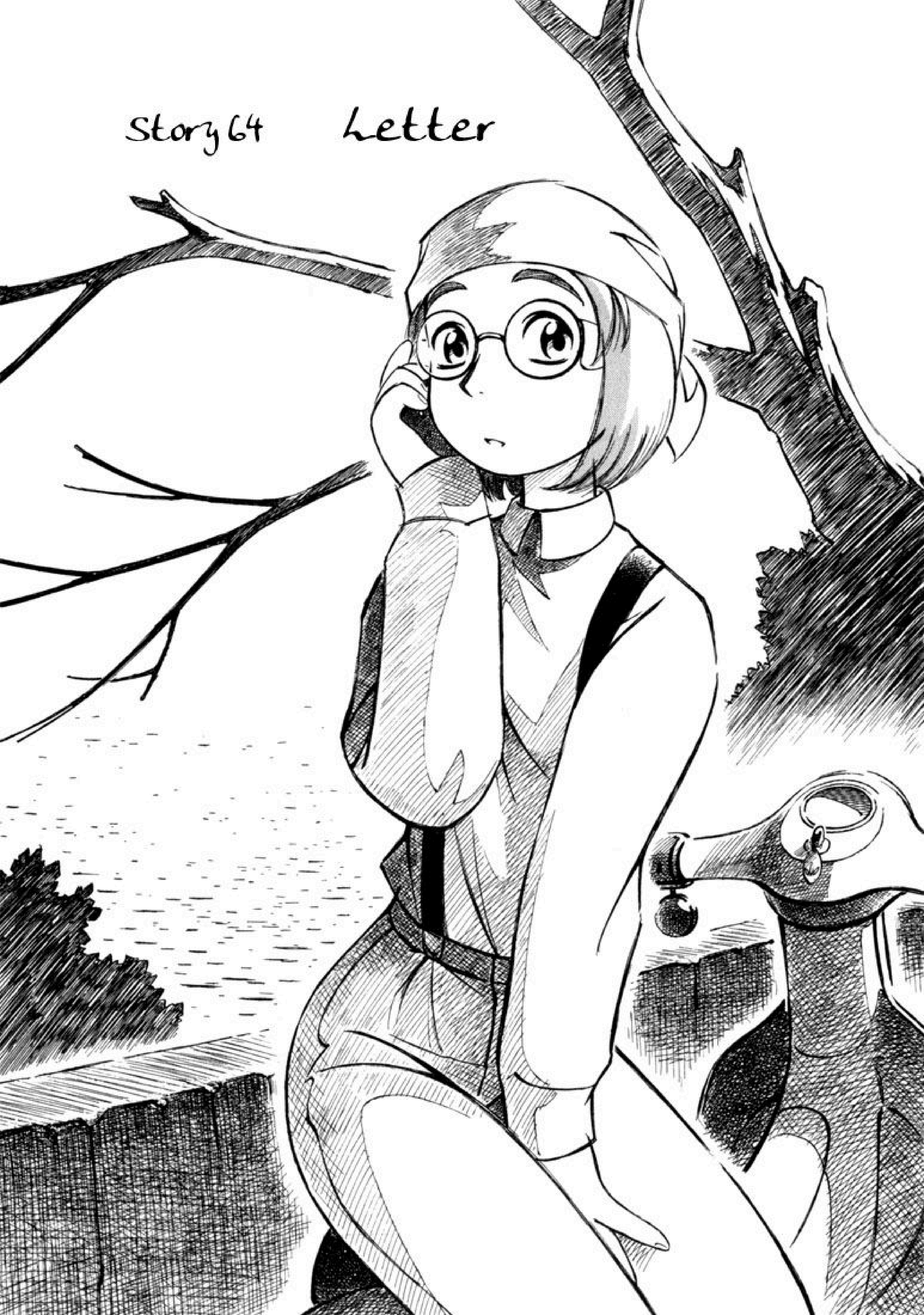

SOMEHOW, THIS SEEMS LIKE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY.
THERE'S SOMETHING I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT EVER SINCE I MET YOU AND KOKONE.
AT FIRST, I DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING OUTSIDE OF MY HOUSE. THAT WAS MY PLACE.
NOT LONG AGO, IT FELT LIKE I COULD ONLY GO AS FAR AS THE GAS STATION.
NOW IT FEELS AS IF MY HOME REACHES FROM HERE TO AROUND ASAHINA PASS.

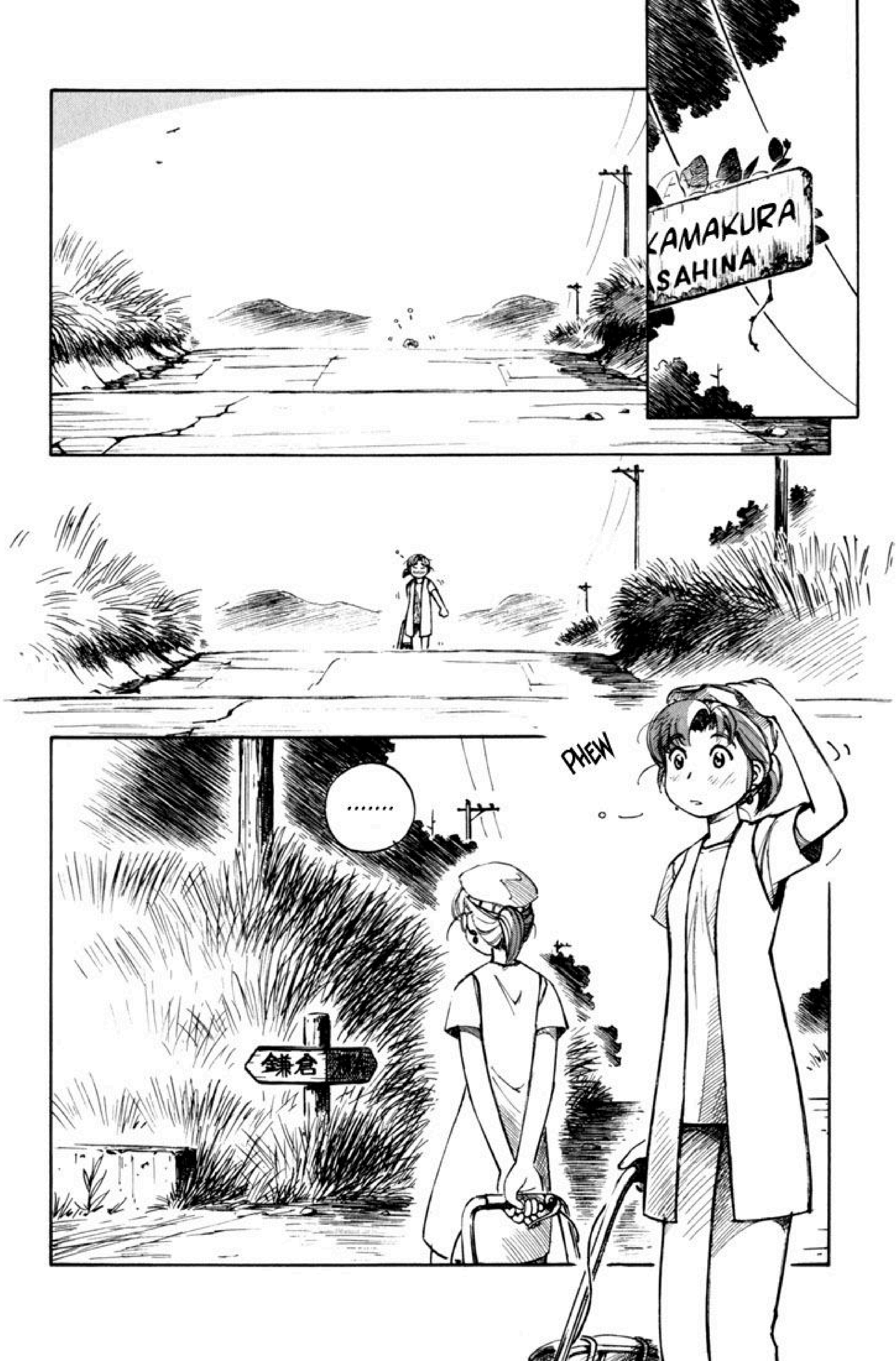

IT FEELS AS IF MY PLACE IS EXPANDING.
THERE ARE MANY THINGS I WANT TO SEE.
AND I GUESS I'LL BE LOOKING FOR WORK, TOO.
...IS THAT SO?
YES... AND SO, NOW MORE THAN EVER...
I REALLY WANT TO GO OUT AND SEE THE WORLD AROUND ME.

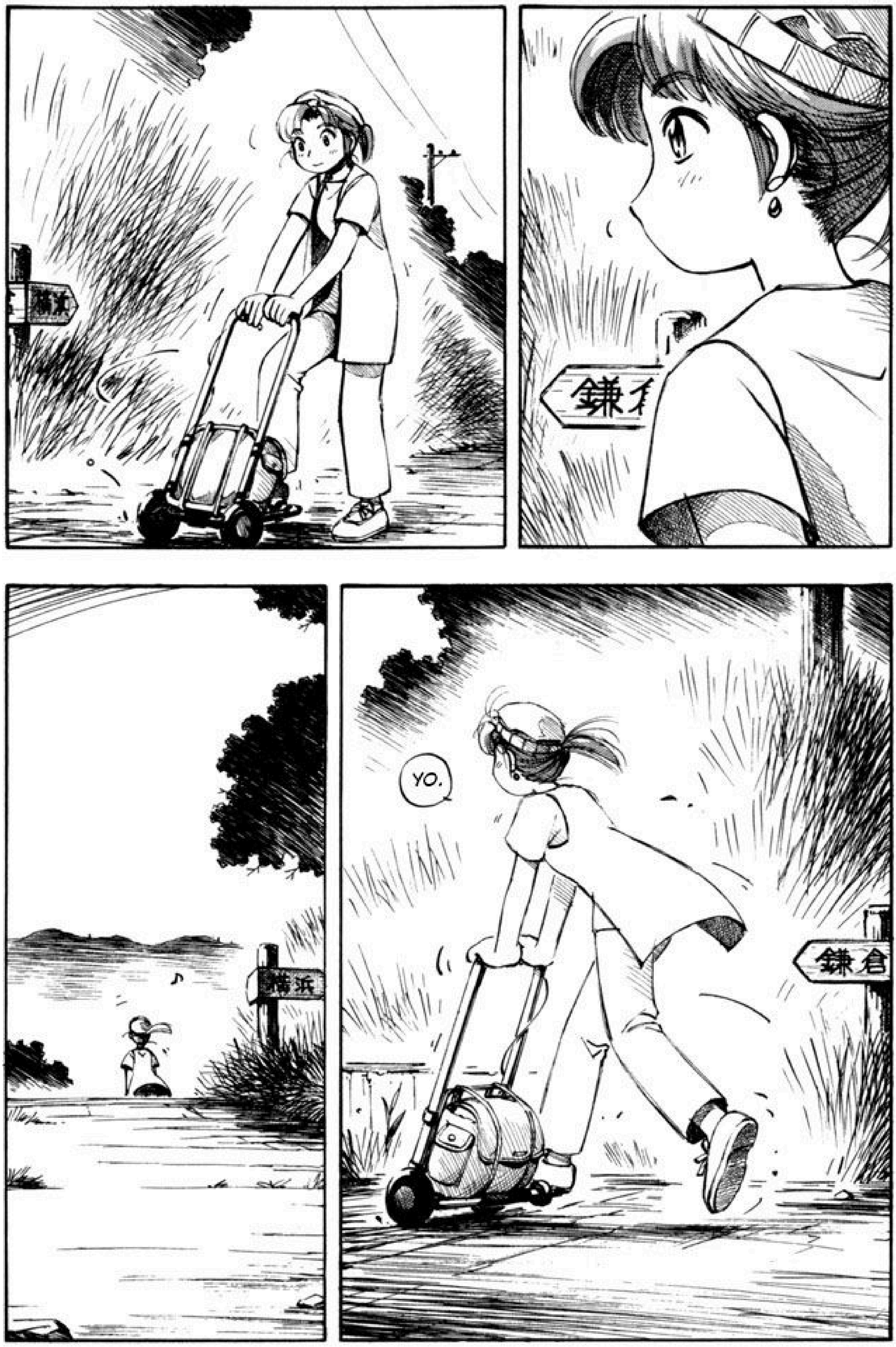

THE LONGER I WAIT, THE HARDER IT WILL BE TO LEAVE.
WHEN ARE YA LEAVING?
.........
IN THE NEXT TWO OR THREE DAYS.
THAT SO?
YA TAKE CARE OF YERSELF. MAKE SURE YA COME BACK WHEN YER DONE.
I WILL! ....

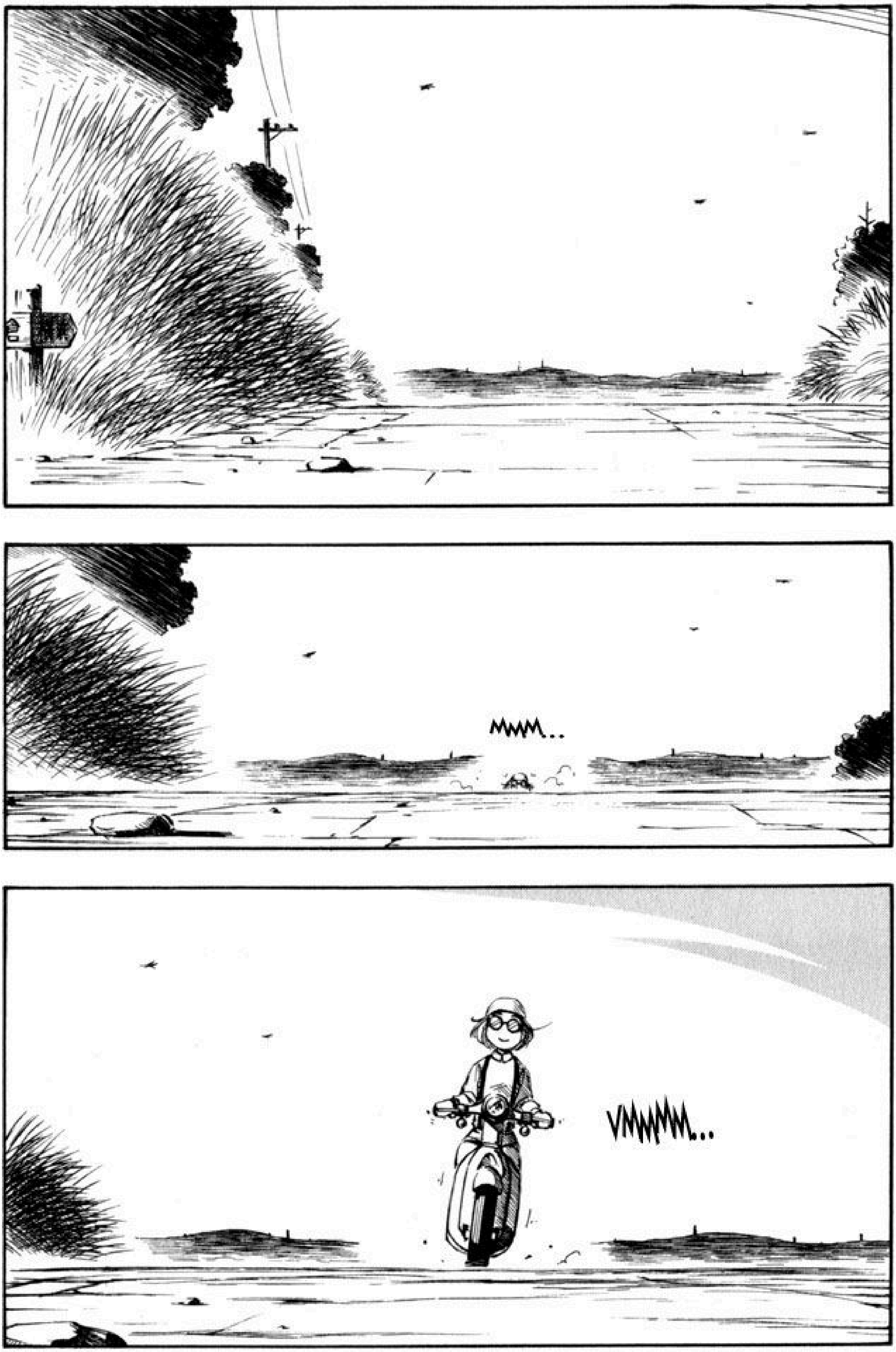


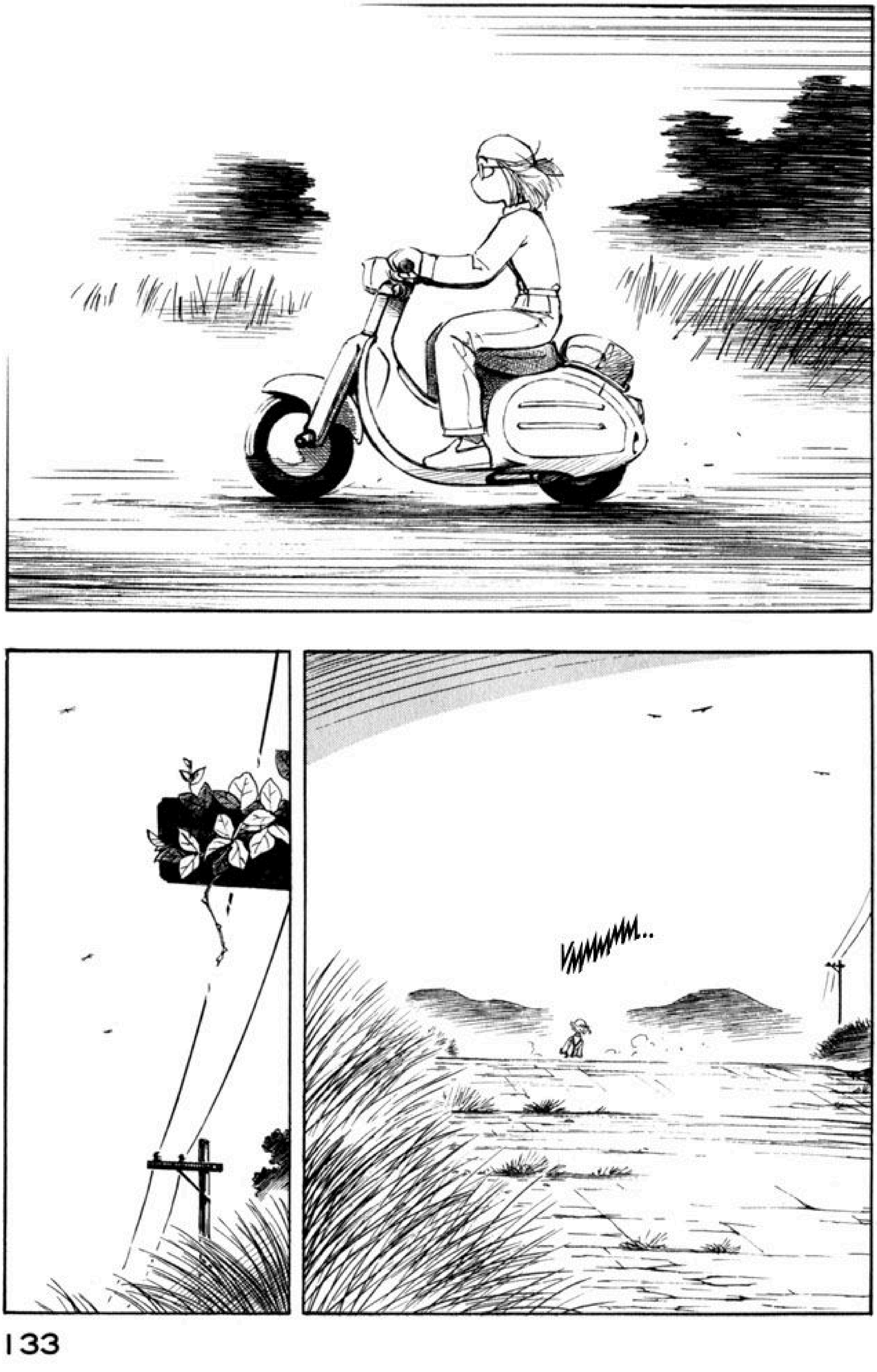

Story 63 - End


Story 64 Letter


KAMAKURA
ASAHINA
PHEW
........
鎌倉


鎌
横浜
YO.
鎌倉
横浜


MMM..
VMMMM...


VMMMMM..


RMMM...
RMMM...

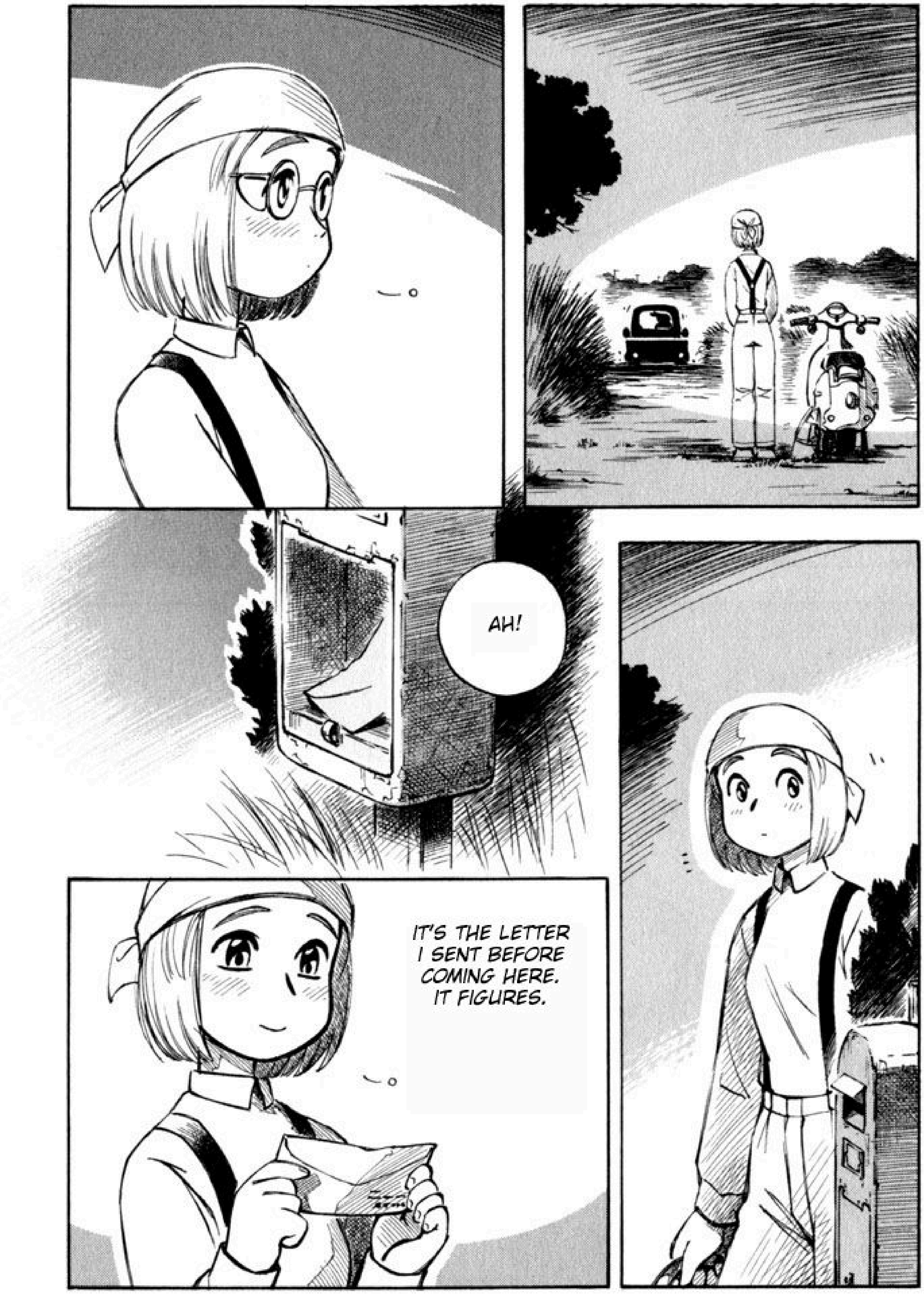

VMMMM..
AH...
PUTT
PUTT

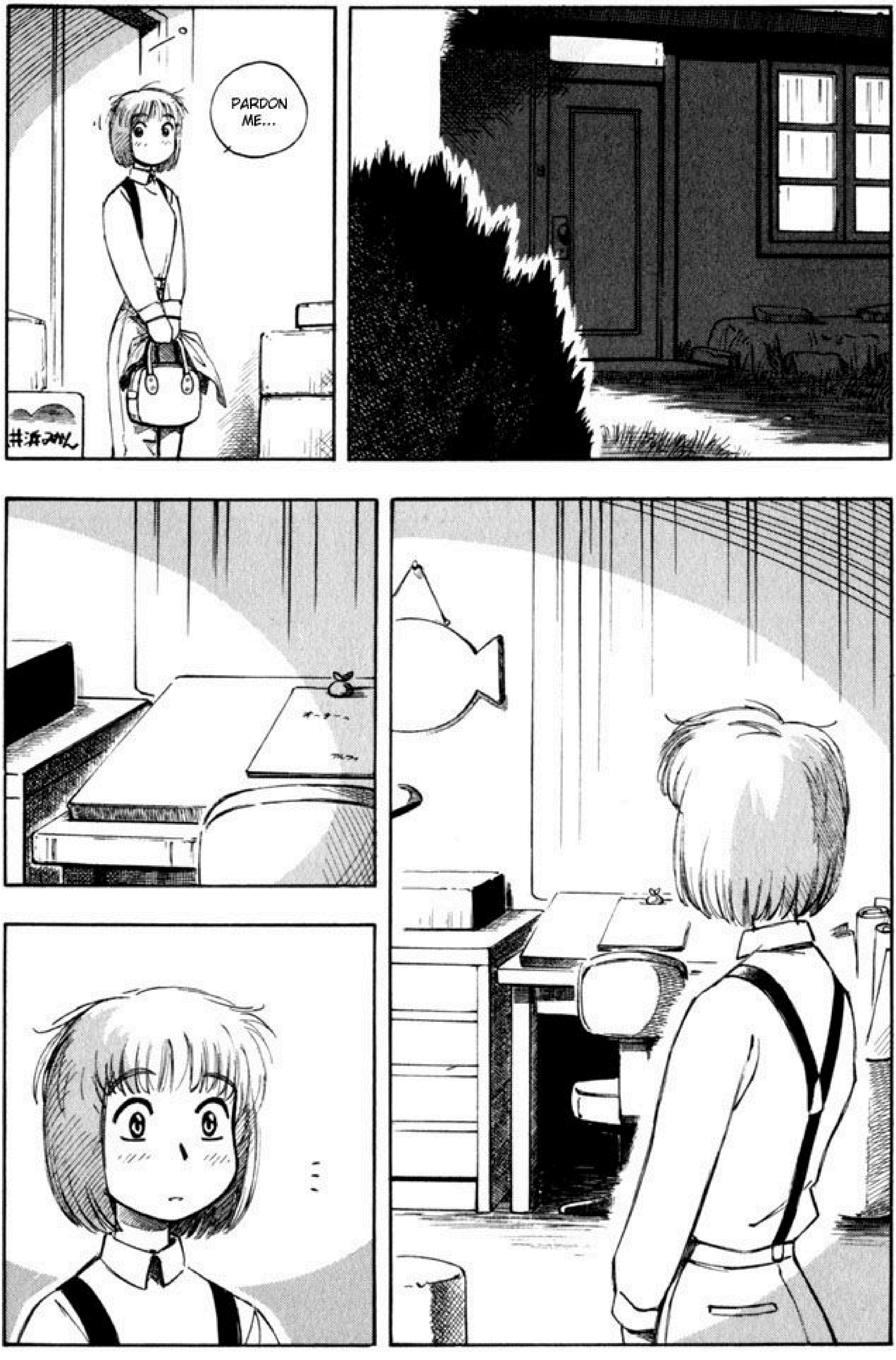



BLINK
...YO.
...MMM.
........
.........


...I SEE.
SO THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED.
YEAH...
IT LOOKS LIKE YA JUST CAME AT THE WRONG TIME.
UM... I GUESS I SHOULD BE GOING.
UM... THANK YOU VERY MUCH.


WAIT UP.
ALPHA LEFT THE KEY TO THE HOUSE WITH ME.
WHY DON'T YA SPEND THE NIGHT THERE?
IT'S ALREADY GETTIN' DARK, AND THE ROADS ARE BAD.
EH... BUT...
YA CAN GIVE THE KEY BACK TO ME AT THE STATION TOMORROW.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
........


AH!
IT'S THE LETTER I SENT BEFORE COMING HERE. IT FIGURES.

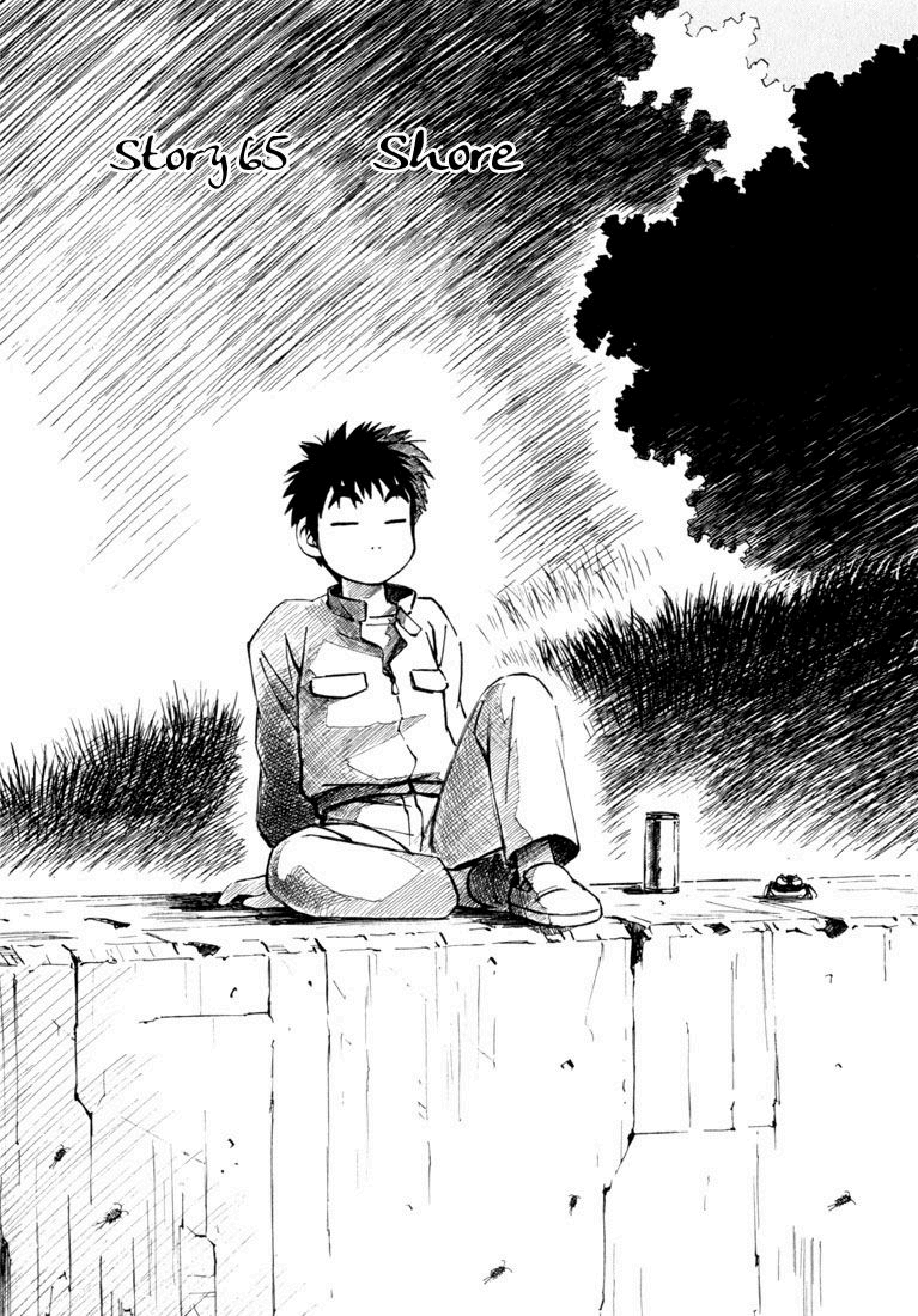

PARDON ME...

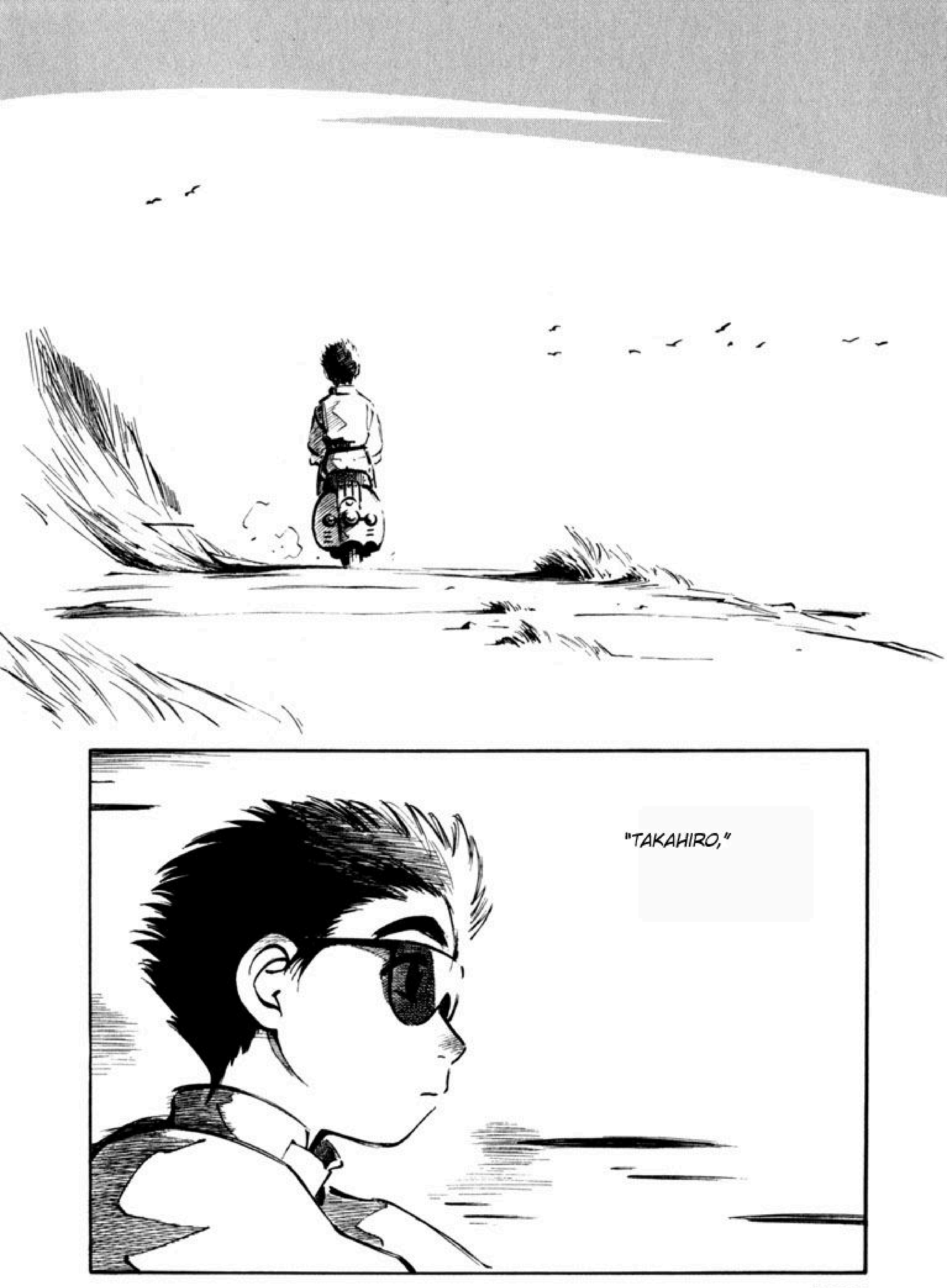

!
To Owner
Alpha
.........
.......
To Owner
Alpha

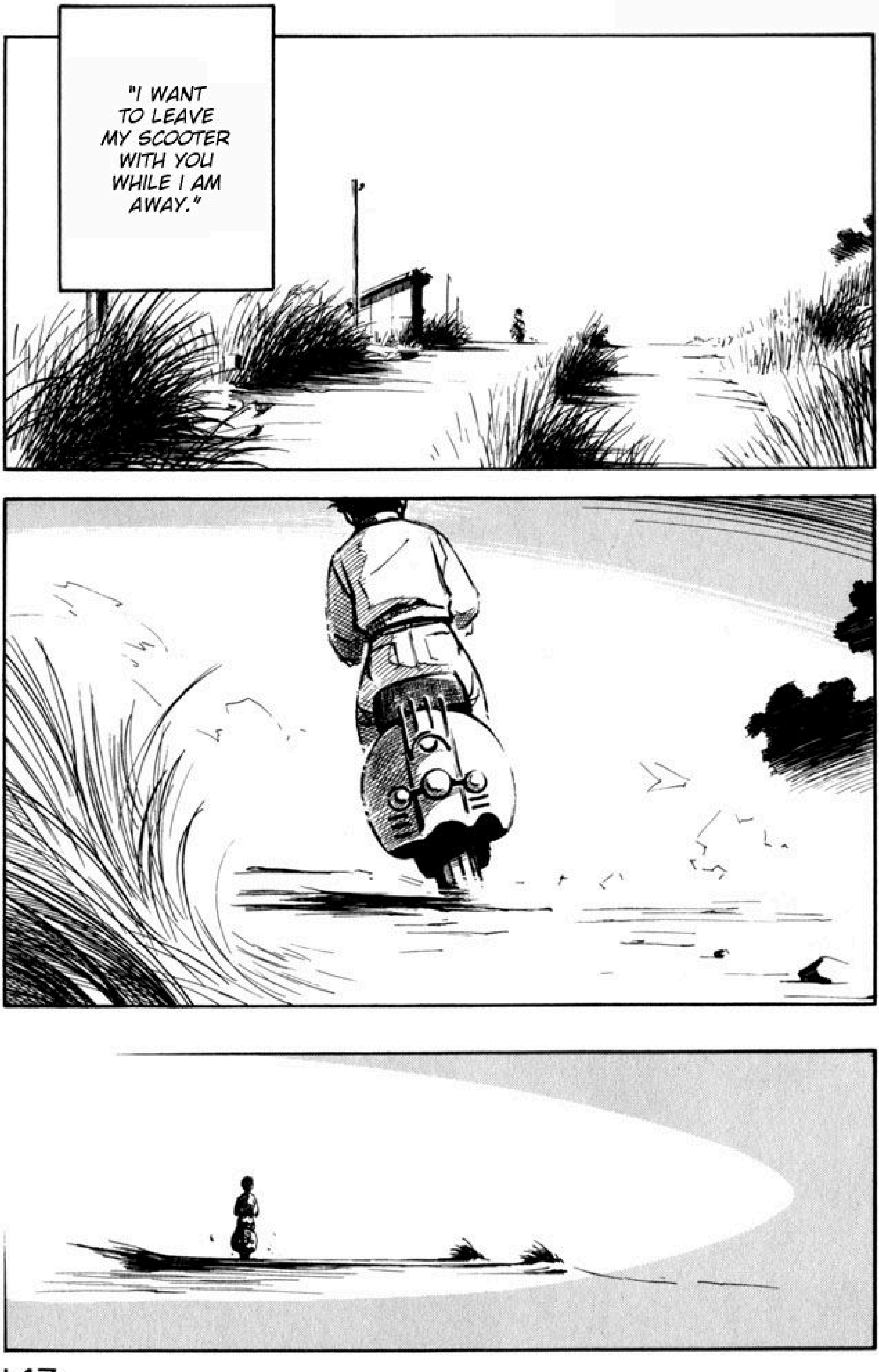

SIGH...


IT'S A SHAME YOU MISSED HER.
WELL, SEE YOU LATER. THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.
SHE LOOKS LIKE SHE DIDN'T SLEEP A WINK.

Story 64 - End

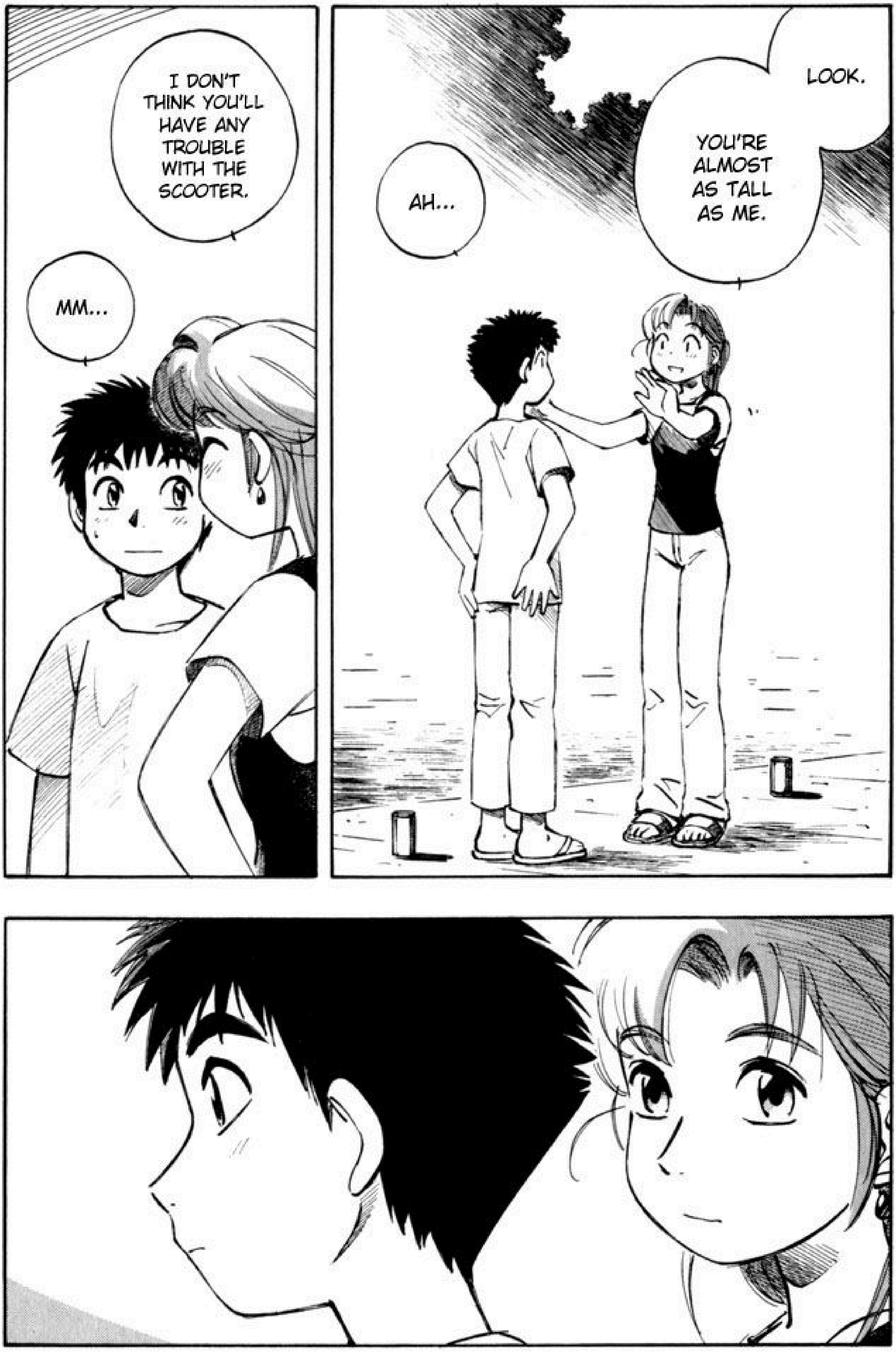

Story 65 Shore


"TAKAHIRO,"


"I WANT TO LEAVE MY SCOOTER WITH YOU WHILE I AM AWAY."

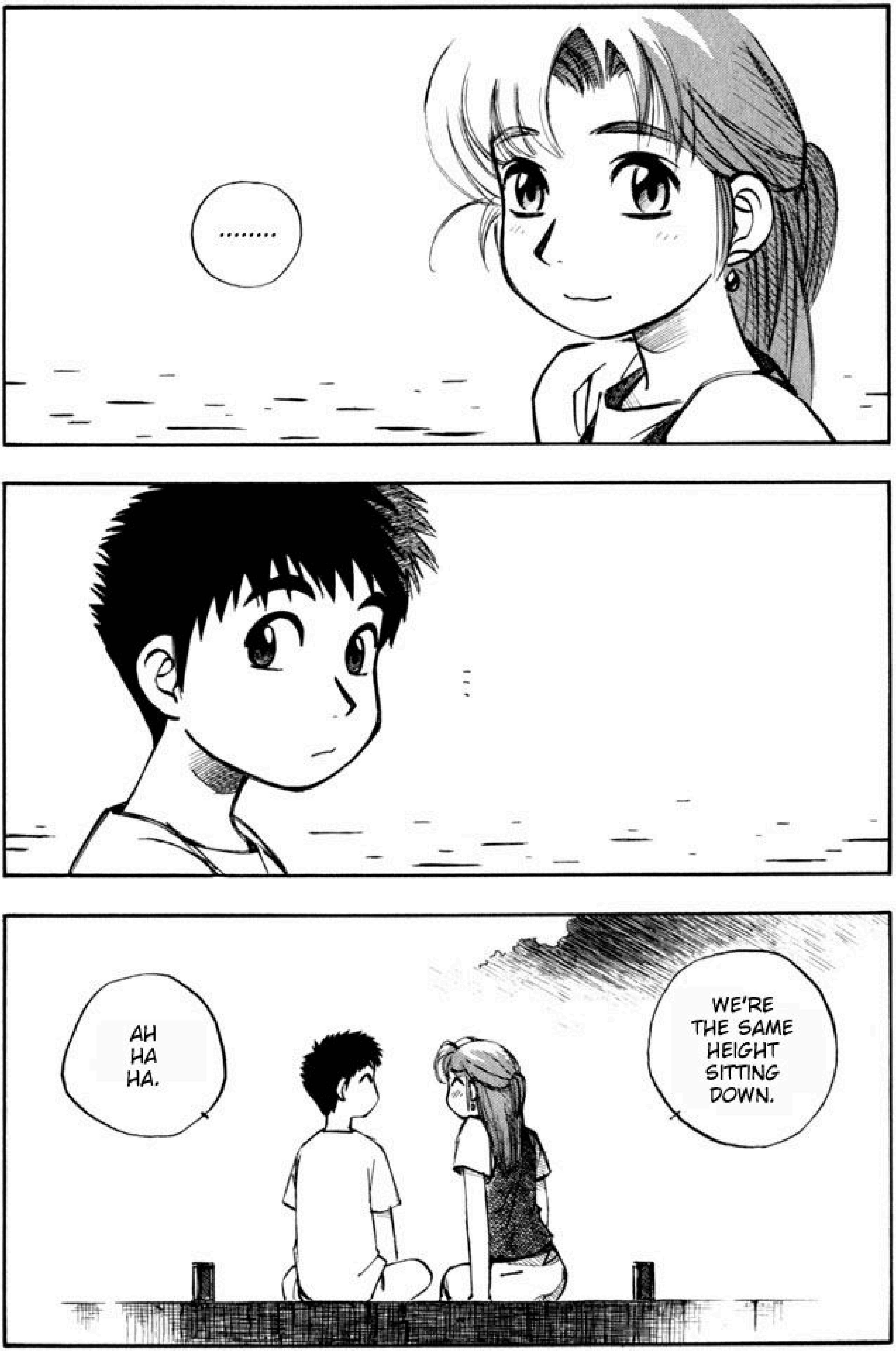

WHAT?
AREN'T YOU GOING TO TAKE IT WITH YOU?
NO.
THERE PROBABLY WON'T BE ANY GAS STATIONS IN SOME OF THE PLACES I'M GOING.
AHH. I SEE.


IT'S BETTER FOR THE BIKE IF SOMEONE USES IT... AS LONG AS YOU DON'T MIND.
SO... I THOUGHT YOU COULD RIDE IT FOR ME.
SURE...
BUT I WONDER IF I CAN DRIVE IT.
...STAND UP FOR A SECOND.

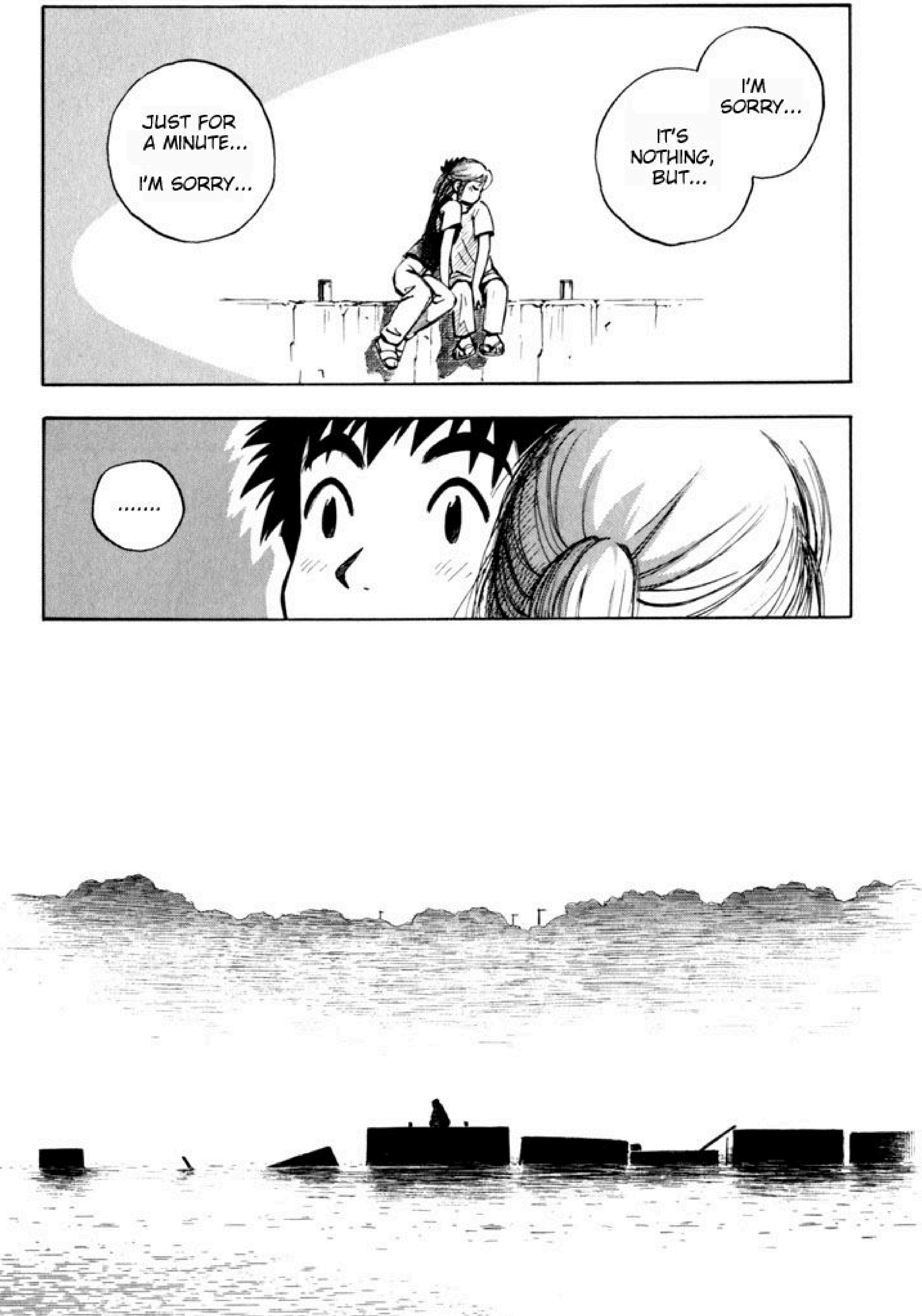

I DON'T THINK YOU'LL HAVE ANY TROUBLE WITH THE SCOOTER.
MM...
LOOK.
YOU'RE ALMOST AS TALL AS ME.
AH...


YOU'RE 13 NOW, AREN'T YOU?
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT.
...TO BE HONEST,
YOU'RE GROWING BIGGER AND BIGGER.
MY KNEES EVEN HURT AT NIGHT.
I ASKED OJI-CHAN, AND HE SAID THAT WAS BECAUSE MY BODY IS GROWING REALLY FAST.


HMM... GROWING UP...
IT'S AMAZING.
NEXT TIME I SEE YOU, I'LL BET YOU'LL HAVE PASSED ME.
YOU THINK?
WELL...
I'LL LEAVE THE SCOOTER TO YOU.
OKAY.
AH... YOU'LL HAVE TO SHOW ME HOW TO RIDE IT, THOUGH.

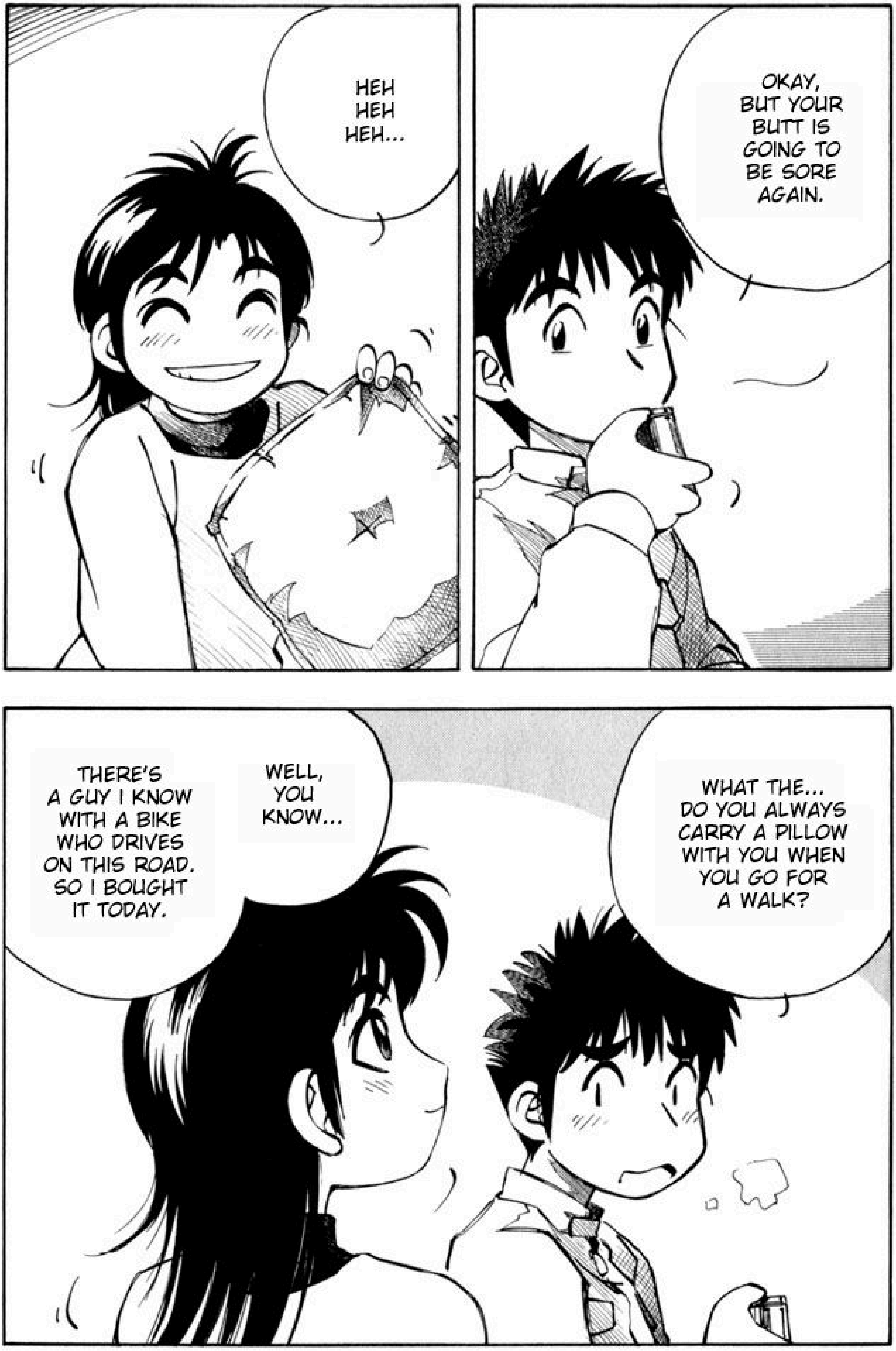

........
WE'RE THE SAME HEIGHT SITTING DOWN.
AH HA HA.


...UH...
HEY...?


I'M SORRY...
IT'S NOTHING, BUT...
JUST FOR A MINUTE...
I'M SORRY...
.......

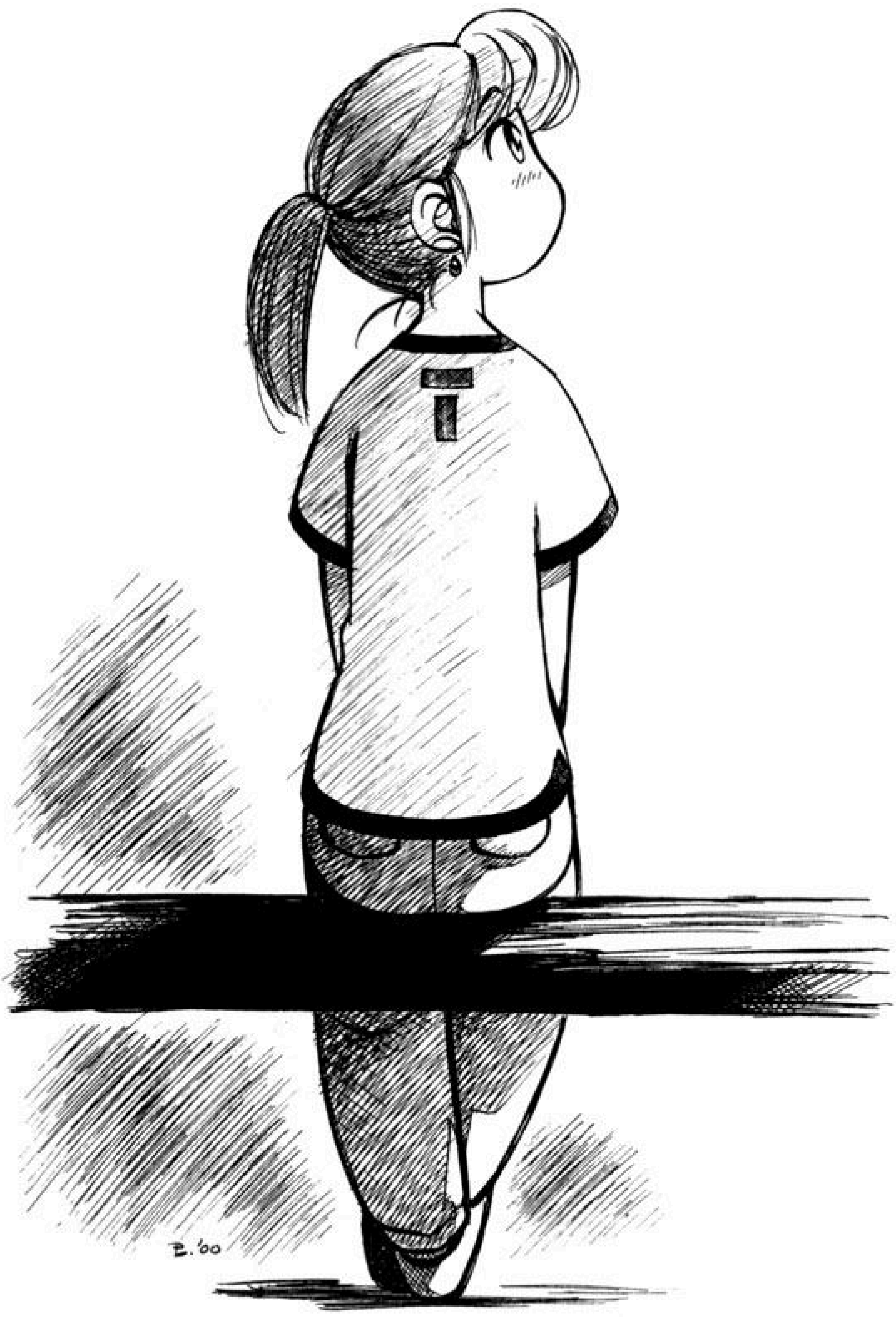

TAKAHIRO!!

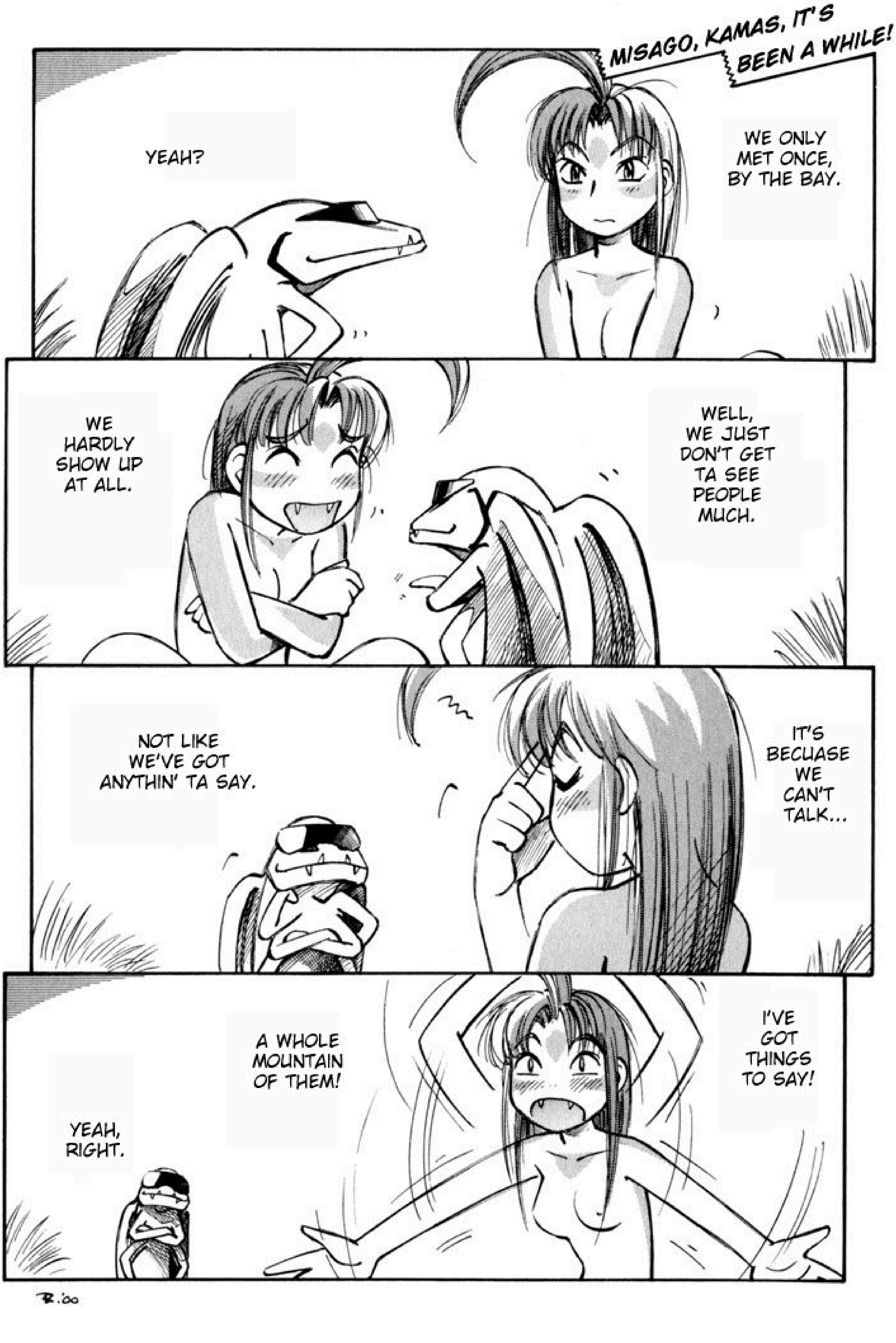

HEEY!
HEY.
WENT SHOPPING?
YEAH. I'M REALLY GLAD I RAN INTO YOU!
GIVE ME A RIDE BACK HOME.
HUH?


OKAY, BUT YOUR BUTT IS GOING TO BE SORE AGAIN.
HEH HEH HEH...
WHAT THE... DO YOU ALWAYS CARRY A PILLOW WITH YOU WHEN YOU GO FOR A WALK?
WELL, YOU KNOW...
THERE'S A GUY I KNOW WITH A BIKE WHO DRIVES ON THIS ROAD. SO I BOUGHT IT TODAY.


OH, REALLY?
REALLY!
WANT SOME COFFEE?
SURE!


HERE.
WHAT, I GET YOUR LEFT-OVERS?




MISAGO, KAMAS, IT'S BEEN A WHILE!
WE ONLY MET ONCE, BY THE BAY.
YEAH?
WELL, WE JUST DON'T GET TA SEE PEOPLE MUCH.
WE HARDLY SHOW UP AT ALL.
IT'S BECUASE WE CAN'T TALK...
NOT LIKE WE'VE GOT ANYTHIN' TA SAY.
I'VE GOT THINGS TO SAY!
A WHOLE MOUNTAIN OF THEM!
YEAH, RIGHT.

雑誌 55719-10

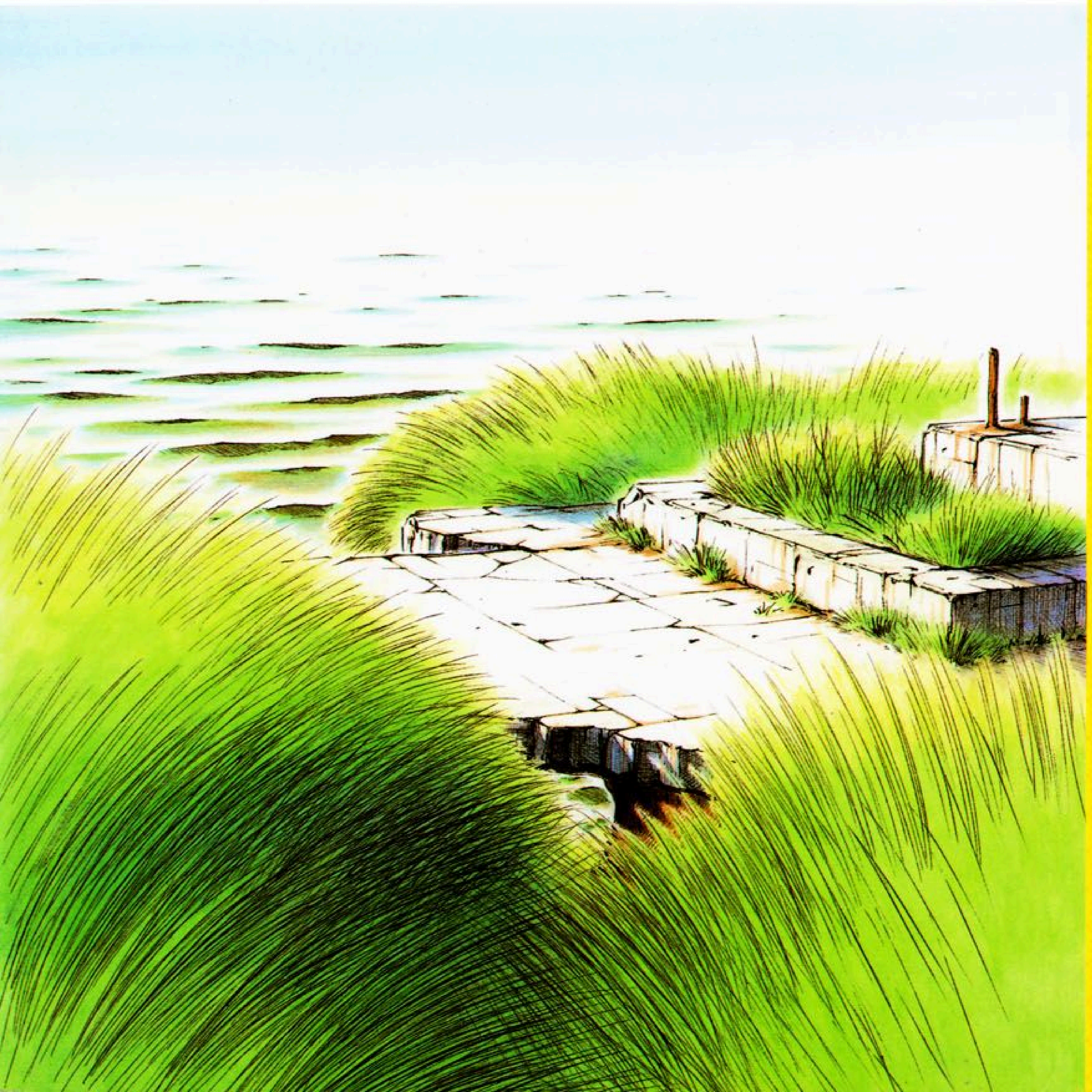
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こどものころは
となり町の小学校にさえ
ものすごい文化的人種的ギャップを
感じたもんですが
以前　中国の旅から帰ってきた時
成田からの町並みも日本語も
中国と同じものに感じて
びっくりしたことがあります。
年のこともあるとはいえ
人の頭のそういう雑なフォローぐあいは
なんか好きです。

芦奈野ひとし

